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*Engraved for the History of Count Struensee.*

*Ch. Mann Simon*

A

FAITHFUL NARRATIVE

OF THE

*Conversion and Death*

OF

COUNT STRUENSEE,

Late PRIME MINISTER of DENMARK.

Published by D. MUNTER,

AN EMINENT DIVINE, who was ordered by the  
KING to prepare him for Death.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE HISTORY

OF

COUNT ENEVOLD BRANDT,

From the Time of his Imprisonment to his Death.

The Whole translated from

THE ORIGINAL GERMAN,

By the Rev. Mr. WENDEBORN,

Minister of the German Chapel on Ludgate-Hill.

Embellished with the Heads and Coats of Arms of both the  
unhappy COUNTS.

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THE SECOND EDITION.

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RIGHT HONOURABLE  
M E L E S I N A,  
COUNTESS DOWAGER  
OF  
C H E S T E R F I E L D,  
THIS BOOK  
IS HUMBL Y DEDICATED  
BY  
THE TRANSLATOR.



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A D V E R T I S E M E N T  
O F T H E  
T R A N S L A T O R.

*M*OST accounts which are given of conversions of hardened sinners, are drawn up with more enthusiasm than reason, and are too frequently embellished with declamations, tales, dreams, and other insignificant trifles; so that Christians, who are better acquainted with the true spirit of our divine religion, must be offended by them; and others, who are no friends of religion, will certainly turn them into ridicule, and harden themselves in their unbelief and immorality. The Translator took the original of this book

*into his hand with prepossessions of this kind; but he found himself agreeably deceived, and thought it, after an attentive reading, capable of promoting the cause of true religion and real virtue, for both which he is not ashamed to profess himself a warm advocate. With this view he undertook the translation of it, fearing that in this, as well as in all other nations, there are but too many whose principles of religion and morality are similar to those of Struensee, and who indulge themselves, according to their stations and opportunities, full as much as he did, in every passion and vice which proved his ruin.*

*There is one thing which must recommend this account to the particular attention of the reader; and that is, its authenticity: for there is not the least doubt in this respect, which the Translator could not engage to satisfy, if it was required; but he trusts, that a candid perusal of the work itself will afford sufficient evidence of its being genuine. D. Munter, who is the undoubted Author of the account concerning Struensee, is an eminent Divine,*  
and



and Rector of one of the principal German churches at Copenhagen; and the character he bears is sufficient to establish its veracity. The same must be said of the History of Count Brandt, which was written by D. Hee. These clergymen were specially appointed by the King of Denmark, to attend the two respective state prisoners; and therefore the English reader is desired to remove all unfavourable impressions, which are generally annexed to publications of gaol ordinaries.

As to the translation, the Translator owns, that it would be the highest presumption in him to pretend to any elegance of style; he being a Foreigner, who, but a few years ago, was entirely unacquainted with the English language. He hopes, therefore, the candid English reader, who is master of his native tongue, will overlook the faults he may here happen to meet with.—He further declares, that though he is sure he has not wilfully mistaken the original, which he may be supposed to be in some measure

*a master of, from his education and profession, yet he has, according to the rule of Horace, not translated word for word; and many places where the good Doctors appeared to him a little declamatory, and too prolix in explaining speculative doctrines, he has partly left out, and partly abridged; and he is now, after the whole is finished, so far from thinking that he has done wrong in this respect, that he rather wishes he had left out a great deal more. Nevertheless, every thing of importance is translated, and those passages which are Struensee's own words are, together with his letter to D. Munter and all other letters through the whole book, translated verbatim; and the English reader, who is wholly unacquainted with the language of the original, and therefore enabled to peruse the translation only, may rely upon his reading a faithful one.*

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## D. MUNTER's PREFACE.

**M**ANY reasons have induced me to relate the salutary reformation of Count Struensee. He has made much noise in the world. Every thing that is written about him is read with eagerness. Perhaps this account may be perused with utility, and even excite the attention of those who are of the same way of thinking as Struensee formerly was, to reflect seriously on religion and morality. He himself wished that those, who through him were seduced to a contempt of religion and morality, or were only misled in their notions of religion and virtue, might be made acquainted of his return to truth and better sentiments, and of the manner in which he was reformed. He hoped

hoped that by this means, those bad impressions might be effaced, which he had made upon their minds.—Lastly, his conversion will reconcile him again to the virtuous, whom his principles and his example might have offended.

That I may the better convince my readers, of the truth of what I relate, I have chosen to give an account of every single interview I had with him. I never went to him unprepared. I meditated on every subject first, and then wrote it down. As soon as I came home, I entered in my journal what had happened and what he said, and wherever I have introduced him speaking, it is as near as possible in his own words.

Some things which I relate may be looked upon as trifling, but sensible readers will oftentimes find the character of a person placed in a stronger light by these trifles, and then they cease to be such, and do not deserve this name.

The books I gave from time to time to the Count, and which he perused with attention, filled up many vacancies in my instruction. They prepared him for that which followed, and enlightened his understanding more in one month, than by mere conversation could have been done in twelve.

How the account given by Struensee himself in his own writing arose, I have related in the course of the narrative itself. But is it true that he wrote it himself? His hand-writing is well enough known in Denmark, the paper he wrote upon was given him by his judges, every sheet was numbered and signed by them, and could reach no other persons hands but his.—But have I dictated to him the contents? I declare that it fully can be proved, that he, during my absence, filled up those sheets, which were marked, and were given him one by one, and were delivered up again in the same manner. But is what he has drawn up, and which I publish here, a true account,

count, is it agreeable to the original? Whoever entertains doubts of this kind, may inspect the original itself, which is in my possession, or may take it along with him for a time, sufficient to compare it with the copy. I thought it necessary to mention all these particulars, because I know, how little the narrative of a clergyman, concerning the conversion of a deist, is credited by those, whose party he has left. They always are ready to say: It is all imposition. However, they certainly will not be able to prove it in this instance. If they should say, that Struensee turned christian through fear, or that he was out of his mind, or that I stunned him with my declamations; I must leave it to them to judge as they think proper.

My intention in publishing what Struensee with his own hand has drawn up, is to make it appear, that he himself had attentively considered his former system as well as christianity, and that, after such a mature consideration, he was induced to  
quit

quit the former, and to embrace the latter,

An accuracy in ideas and expressions, no body will expect in the writings of a man, who studied religion but a few months, who through the whole course of his former life thought very little of it, and who never wrote a word about it. If it should be found entirely wanting in some places, I hope every christian (and every christian will judge according to charity) will not charge him with heresy, which was (even the name of it) unknown to him. The chief point, that he died trusting in the mercy of God through Christ Jesus, with sentiments as well reformed as could be done without a miracle, I hope no body will dispute. But I scarce dare to judge of the merit of this conversion, since it concerns me too much, and I wish too ardently that every one may believe it to be a sincere one; even this shews me the danger I am in, of deceiving myself in my opinion. Therefore, having  
here

here faithfully given the narrative of this conversion, I leave it to sensible and judicious christians to determine concerning the probability of it.

I do not know whether I have occasion to declare, that by the account which I give here, my intention is neither to render the Count's memory odious, nor to apologize for him. Those who on account of his crimes, have just reason to be prejudiced against him, will now think it their duty to forgive him, and to pity his former infatuation. Those who find his behaviour in the latter part of his life decent and becoming a christian, will not forget what he was before, and how inevitably he drew his melancholy fate upon himself.

*Copenhagen, June the 22d, 1772.*

ERRATUM.

P. 80. l. 14. for *now found*, read *formerly thought*.

THE



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THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
CONVERSION  
OF  
COUNT STRUENSEE.

COUNT Struensee had, neither before nor during the time of his greatest prosperity, shewn himself a religious or a moral man, at least no one could think him to be such; his own example, some of his public regulations, and his abolishing such laws as were made to restrain vice and immorality, seemed clearly to prove, that the general opinion concerning his sentiments of religion was not altogether ill founded. Whoever had the most favourable opinion of him, thought him an inconsiderate man, who had given himself up entirely to pleasure and ambition, and who perhaps might recover from his errors. But all sensible people agreed in this, that during his administration religion had every thing to fear, and that the

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morals

morals of the people, at least in the metropolis, were in danger of becoming wild and ungovernable.

These reflections occasioned many honest and good people, who are incapable of rejoicing at the misfortunes of others, to look upon the 17th of January, the day when Struensee fell, as one of the happiest days in their life: they saw the rights of virtue and piety secured from that danger which seemed to threaten them; they wished that the man, from whom no more was to be feared, and whose unhappy fate might easily be foretold, would acknowledge his errors and his crimes, and that God afterwards would grant him mercy.

When by the committee that was appointed to enquire into his affairs, so much was discovered that it was sure his life would fall a sacrifice to public justice, I received the King's orders to visit him in his prison, and to mind the welfare of his soul. I did not know the man, nor did he know me; and as to our principles and sentiments, they were to all appearance very different. I had even to expect that my profession and the intent I visited him with would make him distrust me; on the other hand, I had little reason to put great confidence in him. However, I entertained some hopes, that in his present situation he might find even a conversation

versation with a clergyman not quite insupportable; and the compassion I had for him would never permit me to prepossess him against me by severe and ill-timed expostulations. Besides, I was told by some of his former acquaintance, that he was open, and in some respects sincere; I thought it therefore not impossible to establish a friendship between us that might promote my intention concerning him. With these hopes I began to visit him, and I praise God for the blessing he has granted to my labours.

*The first Conference. March the first, 1772.*

**I** Could at present have no other view but only to lay some foundation for our mutual confidence, and to make him look upon the intention of my visits as important, and, when an opportunity should offer, to know his sentiments about religion.

When he was told I was there, and wished to speak to him, he enquired whether I came by command? being answered in the affirmative, he complied. He received me with a sour and gloomy countenance, in the attitude of a man who was prepared to receive many severe reproaches, with a silence that shewed contempt. We were alone, and I was greatly moved, beholding the misery of a man who, but a few

weeks ago, was the first and the most powerful of all the King's subjects. I could neither hide my feelings, nor would I. Good Count, said I, you see I come with a heart that is sensibly affected for you : I know and feel my obligations towards an unhappy man, whom God, I am sure, never intended to be born for such a misfortune. I sincerely wish to make my visits, which I am ordered to pay you, agreeable and useful.—Here he quitted his affected attitude, his countenance grew more serene, he gave me his hand, and thanked me for the share I took in his fate. Our conversation, continued I, will be now and then disagreeable both to you and me ; but I profess most solemnly, that I shall tell you even these melancholy truths, which I have to communicate to you, without severity, and even with pain to myself. I know I have no right to give you any unnecessary uneasiness, and you may depend upon my sincerity. Should it happen that accidentally in our conversation a word should slip from me which perhaps may appear offensive, I declare beforehand that it never was said with such a design, and I beg that in such instances you will overlook my precipitation. With an air and a look that appeared to me not very favourable, he replied, “ Oh ! you may say what you please.”

I shall

I shall certainly, good Count, say nothing but what my great desire to contribute towards your future happiness, as much as lies in my power, shall oblige me to. I wish to raise your attention to a serious consideration of your moral state, and how you stand in regard to God. You do not know how your fate in this world may be decided, and christianity, which I teach and believe, makes it my duty earnestly to wish for your everlasting happiness. Consider my visits and my conversation only in this view, and I hope you will not disapprove of them. I had several reasons to decline the King's order which brings me to you : but the hope of comforting you in your misfortunes, and of advising you to avoid greater ones, was too important for me. Do not charge me with views of a meaner sort. I come not for my own sake, but only with an intent of being useful to you. He then confessed twice that he was fully convinced, I did it for his own advantage.

If you are convinced of this, continued I with an emotion of heart, grant me then that confidence, which you cannot refuse a man, who is anxious for your welfare. I shall return it with the most thankful friendship, although you in the beginning should take me for a weak and prejudiced man. I shall not be tired in this

friendship, but endeavour to make it useful to you, since I am your only friend upon earth, and since you certainly will call upon your only friend for comfort. Here he stared at me, as I think, with tears in his eyes, and pressed me by the hand.

I found him moved, and endeavoured to make use of this advantageous moment. If you wish to receive that comfort, said I, which, in my opinion, I can promise you as the only true one, do not cherish that unhappy thought of dying like a philosophical hero; for I doubt whether you will be able to keep it up to the end. I am afraid your courage will leave you at last, though perhaps you may force yourself to shew it outwardly. Firmness and tranquillity of mind, on the near approach of death, is certainly the effect only of a good conscience. "In all my adversities," answered he, "I have shewn firmness of mind, and agreeably to this character, I hope I shall die not like an hypocrite." Hypocrisy, said I, in such moments, would be still worse than an affected firmness, though even this would be a kind of hypocrisy. In case of death, do not trust to your former resolution, and do not compare your former adversities, which were perhaps nothing but sickness and distress, with that fate which is now  
ready

ready to fall upon you.—But perhaps you entertain some hopes of saving your life?—“No!” said he, “I flatter myself with no hopes at all.”—But you do not see death near you, said I; you do not know the time when you shall leave this world? Perhaps it is at some months distance. But, (here I took him by the hand) my dear Count, suppose I was ordered to tell you that you was to die to-day or to-morrow, would not your courage fail? “I do not know,” said he. But, continued I, if your courage should leave you, and it was then too late to look out for comfort and hope, how do you think your heart would stand affected? He answered nothing. You see by this that the intent of our conversation is of great importance to you, and deserves all your attention. I aim at nothing less, than to prepare you for eternity, that it may be a happy one. But I must expect that we are not both of the same opinion, in regard to the state of man after death. Yet, though you might have persuaded yourself that there is no life to come, and consequently neither rewards nor punishments, I cannot help thinking that there never was a time, when you were fully convinced of it. Your inward feelings have frequently contradicted you. The thought of eternity frightened you, though unfortunately

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you

you had art enough to stifle it in its birth.—However, it will be always out of your power to prove that there is no eternity.

He heard me with attention, but he would not own that he ever had any inward impressions of immortality, or had been afraid of it. Perhaps he might have been, but he did not recollect it. He owned the thought, that he should soon entirely cease to be, was disagreeable to him ; it frightened him, he wished to live, even if it were with less happiness than he now enjoyed in his prison. But he added, he did not find the thought of total annihilation so terrible as he had found it was to many, who entertained the same sentiments with him,

I continued, You cannot deny the possibility of a future life, for there is at least as much probability for it as there is against it. I believe I could evince from mere reason, that eternity is highly probable, which in such cases amounts almost to certainty. But suppose it was only probable, which you must agree to, it is even then a matter of great importance to you, for you to know what may perhaps happen to you hereafter. In case you had to fear an unhappy life, you should prepare yourself against it, or make it at least tolerable.—He agreed to this, but added, “ You will hardly make me believe  
that



that there is a future life, and though you perhaps may convince my understanding by reasons which I cannot overthrow, my heart however will not yield to the conviction. My opinion, which is opposite to your's, is so strongly woven into my sentiments; I have so many arguments in favour of it; I have made so many observations from anatomy and physic, which confirm it, that I think it will be impossible for me to renounce my principles. This however I promise, that I will not wilfully oppose your endeavours to enlighten me, but rather wish, as far as it lies in my power, to concur with you. I will not dissemble, but honestly tell you of what I am convinced, and of what I am not. I will deal with you openly; this is my character, and my friends can bear witness to it." In our enquiries, I desired him to guard against his careless way of thinking, to which, in my opinion, he had been hitherto addicted, and which had thrown him into this depth of misery. He answered:

" I do not deny my having lived inconsiderately in the world, and I feel now the consequences of it."

I trust in your promise, added I, that you will deal with me honestly. If you did not, you would impose upon me, though perhaps but for a few

a few days. But you certainly cannot deceive the Supreme Being and your own conscience. It would give me the highest pleasure if my intentions should succeed. But besides the assistance of God, you must do all the rest yourself. I can only guide you, and it is your own interest to mind your welfare, and you are obliged to employ all the time which is left you upon this business.

I afterwards desired him to acquaint me with his system of religion, that I might be able to judge, where our opinions differed. I am inclined to think you are not a christian, and you may easily guess how much I wish you to be one. It is not my intention to force christianity upon you ; but I hope to represent it to you as so important and amiable, that you yourself will think you stand greatly in need of it. He answered :

“ It was true, he was very far from being a christian, though he acknowledged and adored a Supreme Being, and believed that the world and mankind had their origin from God.—He could never persuade himself, that man consisted of two substances. He looked upon himself and all other men as mere machines ; he had borrowed this system, not from de la Mettrie, whose book he had never read, but had formed it

it by his own meditation. It was God that first animated this human machine ; but as soon as its motion ceased, that is, when man died, there was no more for him either to hope or to fear. He did not deny that man was endowed with some power of liberty, but his free actions were determined only by his sensations. Therefore, man's actions could be accounted moral, only as far as they related to society. Every thing that man could do, was in itself indifferent. God did not concern himself about our actions, and if their consequences were in man's own power, and he could prevent their being hurtful to society, nobody had a right to reproach him about them. He added, he must own, that he was very sorry for some of his actions, and in particular, that he had drawn others with him into misfortunes ; but he feared no bad consequences or punishments after this life. He could not see, why such punishments were necessary to satisfy the justice of God, even though he allowed that God minded our actions. Man was punished already enough in this world for his transgressions. He himself was certainly not happy during the time of his greatest prosperity. He had, at least during the last months of it, to struggle with many disagreeable passions.—One of his principal objections

jections against christianity was, that it was not universal. If it were really a divine revelation, it absolutely should have been given to all mankind."

I said at this time but little to answer all this, but recommended to him an excellent book, which, as I hoped, would contribute towards clearing up his ideas about religion. He asked, with a kind of diffidence, "What book?" Jerusalem's Considerations on the principal Truths of Religion, said I; a book which you will read with pleasure, if it even was only for the elegance of its stile. He desired me to bring it to him.

I had observed, that he was really very uneasy about some of his actions, and I thought proper to encrease his uneasiness. I suppose my readers know how much he was to be blamed for his conduct towards count Bernstorff \*. I acquainted him, therefore, upon taking my leave of him, with his death. He called out with an emotion of heart: "What, is he dead?" and seemed to shudder. Yes, said I, he is. His wisdom, religion, and piety, have preserved him the

\* Count Bernstorff was minister of state in Denmark since the year 1750. Struensee got this great and beloved minister dismissed, by a letter of the king's, dated September the 15th, 1770, with a pension of 6000 crowns; he retired to Hamburg, where he died the 18th of February, 1772.

character of a great man to the last; and it is generally believed, that the grief of his last years had hastened his death. When I spoke this, I looked at him with an air which he seemed to understand, for he blushed.

*The second Conference. March the third.*

THE first thing I had to do now, with Count Struensee, was to convince him of the falsity of his system, that man was a mere machine. For hence he concluded, that there was no future life. Besides, as he looked upon eternity as a mere fable, he could not regard religion and morality.

I reminded him of his promise, not to oppose truth wilfully, but rather to meet it half way. You think your opinion, said I, of man's being a mere machine; to be true, and you conclude from thence more, than there is in reality foundation for. However, I presume, you think this opinion of yours is no more than a philosophical hypothesis, and in this view let us consider it to day. It is not very necessary to enter into a particular consideration of it, for it cannot be proved from thence, that there is no futurity. However, let us consider it, that you may not think I intend to surprize you.—When I had

exhausted all my arguments and reasonings, I found they had but little effect upon his understanding. At last he owned, that the hypothesis, of the existence of a soul, was better founded than his. But he said, he had good reasons to maintain his former sentiments ; for the knowledge of man, was in general very uncertain. He might, perhaps, hitherto have imposed upon himself : but he was liable, as often as he adopted a new opinion, to be deceived. Besides, his mind was, in his present situation, neither composed nor serene enough to examine his present principles. He should have done this sooner ; it was now too late. Several things being replied, the whole concluded with a serious and tender exhortation, not to let the few last weeks of his life slip away useless for eternity, but to do his best, to enter into it with good hopes. He then looked very earnestly at me, and casting down his eyes, replied :

“ You must have a great deal of goodness, humanity, and faithfulness of a minister, since you are so anxious about my welfare, and are not displeased at my not agreeing with you exactly in opinion.”

I assure you, continued I, I shall not, until the very last day of your life, desist from exhorting and intreating you, and I hope God will  
bless

blefs my endeavours. But, good Count, I am afraid of your unhappy difpofition, which has contributed fo much to your misfortune ; your ambition, and your defire to be always in the right, prevents your doing juftice to truth. How is it poffible, that you can be ftill fond of an inclination, which has thrown you into fuch a mifery ?

“ Oh ! faid he, this inclination is gone, I am now very little in my own eyes ; and how could I be ambitious in this place !” This paffion, answered I, rages certainly ftill in your foul. The occafions of fhewing itfelf as formerly are only wanting. But though it may oppofe the truth, if you indulge it, yet take heed, left defpifed truth fhould revenge itfelf.

Since it was now greatly my intereft, to foften his heart for humane and tender feelings, for by this I hoped to make way for religion ; I begged him to confider, how infinitely he had afflicted his parents, and how much it, therefore, was his duty, to ufe all his endeavours to procure them that only comfort which was left them, not to be anxious about his future ftate. He answered, “ My father is an honeft man, he acts according to his own fentiments ; but I believe he has treated me too feverely.” You may think fo, faid I, but I fancy you are miftaken.

taken. Without doubt you have been extravagant from your very youth, which your honest father disapproved. This you called severity. "This is true, but"—But, said I, you knew he was father, and you son. Were you ignorant that you owed obedience to your father, who was besides an honest man? "I was dutiful to a certain age." But, said I, were you after certain years less son, and he less father? Confucius, whose moral system, as I remember to have heard, you prefer to that of Christ, might have informed you better. He replied, "You are in the right!"

I left him Jerusalem's Meditations \*, which he promised to read with attention, and took my leave of him, moved and in tears on account of his misery. He desired me to visit him soon again.

*The third Conference. March the fifth.*

WHEN I came to the Count, I addressed him thus,—My heart tells me that we shall advance to-day a step forwards. I see you read Jerusalem's Meditations. How far are you advanced, and how do you like the book? "I

\* *Considerations on the principal Truths of Religion.* To his Highness the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick. Vol. i. Third Edition. Brunswick. 1770.



am come already to that meditation which concerns the morality of man. The book is excellently written, and I find nothing which contradicts my reason. I found something against my opinion of man's being a machine; but still I think sensibility proves it, and explains every thing." I answered, that the organs of our senses were no more than mirrours and spy-glasses, through which we observed the objects; that neither mirrour nor spy-glass could see any thing; but there must be a third, who observed the objects through these instruments, and this third was our soul.

He was sensible of this, but it seemed to be a hard matter for him to own he was in the wrong. Nevertheless, it was necessary he should make this confession before I could proceed any farther. I undertook therefore to prove, that the manner in which his opinion had taken its origin, and had interested his heart so much, tended neither to his credit nor to his advantage. I looked upon this as the best means to expel one shame by another.—He interrupted me very seldom during the time I was speaking, but heard with much attention, and owned that I had exactly pointed out the way which had led him to his opinion. After a short pause on both sides, during which he seemed to be in a deep meditation, he called

out: " Oh ! I hope now, and wish for immortality." I guessed directly that the reading of Jerusalem had brought him so far, and he soon afterwards said himself; " It is impossible not to be brought over by that book."

As he now hoped and wished for immortality, I thought it needless to enter into more ample disquisitions about the existence, nature and immortality of the soul. Besides, I was afraid that these speculative truths might detain us too long, and mislead us to various researches which are but little adapted to make the heart better. It was enough for me that he now was sensible of the existence of eternity: however, we talked to-day about the arguments for the existence of a soul.

The false ease, which hitherto had rendered the Count insensible, and which was supported by his persuasion of there being no future life, was now interrupted. I thought it necessary to remove it entirely before I could procure him true ease of mind. I must convince him therefore, that in that future life, which he hoped and wished for, he could not promise himself an agreeable fate; and for this purpose his notions of the morality of actions were to be rectified first. My readers will recollect that he believed  
human

human actions only so far good or bad as they were attended with good or bad consequences to society. Before I could attack this proposition, I thought proper to shew how little, even according to this principle, he should be able to account for his actions before God. I might at present, said I, leave your rule by which you judge of the morality of actions unmolested. Your actions even then would not bear scrutiny. I was surprized when he answered :

“ I find now, that it is by far better and surer to derive the motives of our actions from God, and to consider him as observing them.”

Saying this, he pointed at Jerusalem's book, and I thanked in my heart this excellent man that he had promoted my endeavours so far.

In the mean time, I begged of the Count to reflect how immoral his actions had been, even according to his former principle of morality. I had now discovered that side where the wounds of his conscience smarted most. He was not by far so much grieved at thinking that he had offended God, and made himself miserable, as that he had ruined his friends with him. This sensation of his I laid hold on, and endeavoured to support and to increase it. I hoped his pain

might by degrees become more universal, and extend itself over his other crimes.

I had scarcely began to touch him on this side, when he burst into tears, and owned, that he found himself in this respect very culpable, and was absolutely at a loss to say any thing in his defence.

Suppose then, continued I, you had to reproach yourself only with being the cause of all the misfortunes your friends now labour under, it must even then be very difficult or rather impossible to account for it before God.

“ I acknowledge this,” said he, “ and therefore shall say nothing to excuse myself before God, and I hope he will not demand this of me. I trust in my repentance and his mercy. Do not you think God will forgive me on account of this philosophical repentance ?”

According to my notions of repentance, I can give you no hopes. I know but one way to receive God’s pardon, and this is not a philosophical but a Christian repentance. I cannot yet produce the reasons why I am obliged to think so; but if you only reflect on God’s mercy, in which you trust, you will find that it is this very mercy which makes it necessary for him to be just, and to shew his aversion to moral  
evil.

evil. Such mercy as that of God, which cannot degenerate into weakness, must no doubt be very terrible to him who has offended against it. I entreat you not to put a blind and ill-founded confidence in it.—Perhaps I pronounced this with a visible emotion of heart, for he interrupted me, saying, “Your humanity must be very great, since your patience is not tired.”

It certainly shall not be tired, but I am uneasy and in pain about you.

“You must not be so much concerned for me. —What would you do if I was so unhappy as to remain unconvinced?”

It would grieve me unspeakably. I should wish to conceive good hopes of you, but I fear without reason. Pray do what lies in your power, God will bless your endeavours. I hope you will even yet, upon good grounds, think yourself pardoned by God, and be able to die with comfort and a fair prospect into eternity. Here he called out, with a deep-fetched sigh: “May God grant it!”

He added, “You wish, and I believe from good reasons, that I might become a Christian.”

To be sure, (replied I) I wish it very much; but you know favours are not forced upon any body; and it is natural for you to look out for the

greatest that can be bestowed upon you. Learn first to feel how dangerous your condition is, and your own wants and misery will then compel you to search for God's mercy, where it is only to be found.

“ But pray,” said he, “ how can christianity be the only way that is revealed by God for our everlasting happiness, since it is so little known among mankind, and since there are, even among christians themselves, so few that keep its precepts ?”

From your first doubts, said I, you mean to draw the inference, that it was against the goodness and justice of God not to reveal to all men a doctrine which is the only one that can render man perfectly happy. But do you know whether God will not save those who are ignorant of christianity by its dispensations, if they behave as well as lies in their power ? And can a man, whom God has presented with a blessing, which he denied to others, think himself for this reason intitled not to mind this blessing or not to value it, because God has not given it to all men ? Has he not distributed all the blessings of his mercy unequally among men ; for instance, honour, riches, health, talents, and even the knowledge of natural religion ? You see by  
this

this that your objection proves more than you intended.

From your second doubt you will conclude, that, because christianity is observed by so very few, therefore it cannot be a sufficient means to answer the purpose, it is said, God intended it for, and consequently its origin cannot be a divine one. But I would wish you to observe, that it is a religion of free beings, and that they are under no controul in a matter which concerns their happiness. Besides, prejudices, errors and passions can render the strongest moral arguments ineffectual. However, it cannot be denied that mankind, upon the whole, since the establishment of the christian religion, has been greatly reformed, and that its power over the human mind is stronger than you seem to credit.

“ But even good christians,” added he, “ often commit sins! Shall, or can a man in this world be perfect? and is the intention of christianity to produce effects, which, as to our present condition, are quite impossible?”

There is a great difference between the sin of a true christian, of whom we speak only, and between the crimes of a wicked man. The former falls but he rises again; the latter continues in his transgressions and repeats them.

And if there was but one christian only upon the whole earth, whose life did honour to his profession, it would be a sufficient reason for every one that knew him, to examine the religion of this only christian, and to adopt it when he found it was well-grounded. He said: "Oh! I have so many of these doubts, that it will be the most difficult thing to satisfy them all."

He uttered this with a mien that expressed great concern, and I thought proper to comfort him by saying, that his doubts would lessen according as he got more acquainted with christianity. And if there should be left an uncertainty about some point or other, he might rest satisfied with thinking that God would judge him, according to the time he had had, the condition he was in, and the sincerity he shewed in his searching after truth; christianity concerned more the heart than the understanding.—I discovered a hope that he soon would become a christian, which he seemed to be pleased with, and when I exhorted him to pray to God to enlighten his mind, he asked:

"Whether a hearty wish, addressed to God, was not already prayer or adoration?"

I answered in the affirmative; and after some exhortations took my leave, and gave him the book  
of



of Reimarus on the principal doctrines of natural religion.

*The fourth Conference. March the eighth.*

I HAD now already great advantages in my hands. The Count was sensible of an approaching eternity, and could not, nor would he any more oppose the impressions which the prospect of it made upon him. He was concerned about his moral condition, but not enough yet; at least, not on account of the displeasure of God, which he was labouring under. He wished christianity might comfort him, but he thought it still an impossibility to be fully convinced of its truth. I now endeavoured to make christianity necessary to him, for reasons which were derived from the misery and danger he was in. I intended to give him opportunity from time to time, to get acquainted with the arguments of the christian religion; that in the same measure, as his desire increased after its comforts, the difficulties which he expected to meet with, might decrease. But, before I could make him truly sensible of the danger which his immoral life had thrown him into, we had first to agree about the reasons, which the morality of human actions is grounded upon.

Since the Count now believed immortality, and in some respect, the morality of actions likewise, I undertook to convince him that human actions are not good or bad, merely on account of their consequences in society, which hitherto had been his opinion.

The reading of the seventh of Jerusalem's Meditations, which treats on the morality of human actions, had, as the Count himself owned, already removed many of his doubts, and taught him that true moral liberty did not consist in determining oneself according to the first impression a thing had made upon us, but that it is required to consider a matter properly, and not to chuse a thing before we are sufficiently acquainted with it. I shewed him, how impossible it was for man always to foresee and to regulate the consequences of his actions, on account of the infirmity and narrow bounds of our understanding, and because we are so easily blinded by our passions.

As to this last reason, the Count himself said, " That passions would overpower us, even then, when we see that the actions to which they excite us can be detrimental to society. They would persuade us, that the consequences they might be attended with are in our power ; that by precaution and acting secretly, we might avoid them.

them. They would supply us with various excuses, and incline us to think them to be true." He did not take it amiss, when I applied this to his own life.

I afterwards proved, that the will of God is the only rule by which the morality of actions is to be determined; not because God had ordered that this action or another should be absolutely good or bad, but because his infinite understanding found them really so from all eternity, even without regard to men, created with liberty to trespass against his moral laws.

The next point I thought necessary to be proved was, that God had really revealed his will about the morality of actions. I would not draw my arguments from the Bible, since I had not yet proved it to be a divine revelation, but rather from the dictates of conscience.

This being done, as well as the nature of the proposition would admit of, I answered the objections which the Count made. The first was, "That though he had no inclination for raising any doubts, but should rather endeavour to avoid them; yet the sincerity wherewith our conferences were to be carried on, required him to tell plainly, what he was not convinced of. Therefore, he owned, that notwithstanding there  
was

was such moral sensation in man, he nevertheless was uncertain, whether it was born with him. Perhaps it might be a certain prejudice?"

If this was so, replied I, how could it happen that this prejudice was an universal one, common both to the virtuous and the wicked?

"Perhaps then," said he, "it is the effect of experience or custom, that we are used to consider the actions of others, as relating to ourselves." My answer was, that this moral sensation is found in man, before he is taught it by experience and custom.

"And suppose," said the Count, "we should find it a consequence of education?"

Neither can this be, replied I, for it is in a child prior to education. It is to be met with in a savage Greenlander and a Hottentot, who reasons on some actions more soundly than nations, whose moral sensations are tainted by education, and by their way of living.

"He now owned, that the notion of morality was born with us, and that it laid deep in our nature. That it took its origin from our Creator, and that we, by the dictates of this inward feeling, were informed of the will of God in regard to good or bad actions."

From

From what he had said, I now drew some inferences, and told him, that in order to qualify himself for God's mercy, it was necessary to search his former life, and to acknowledge his faults and crimes. I was afraid to leave this self-examination entirely to himself; and therefore told him, that I should review with him his life, tho' it was a disagreeable task for both; hoping he would assist me therein with all sincerity. He promised to confess every thing, and giving me his hand, he said, he would take me entirely for his guide.

After some silence on both sides, and amidst his tears, he looked at me with an air that betrayed both anxiety and confidence, and said, "If my tears come only out of the right source!"

Good Count, said I, I suspect the reason why you cry. It is certainly the misfortune which you have thrown your friends into. This is your tender side, which pains, even when it is but slightly touched. Examine yourself, whether it is but personal friendship, or the remembrance of mutual enjoyed pleasures, or the sorrow of having lost the hope of their continuation? or, whether it is the consciousness that you have offended God, religion and virtue, in the persons of your unfortunate friends.

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He considered a while, and at last called out: " Oh! it is extremely difficult, to come to any certainty in this point!"

Not long after, he added: " I fear it is now too late to beg for God's mercy! and perhaps I do it in my present situation out of necessity!"

I told him upon this, that though he had reason to reproach himself very much, that he had spent his whole life without thinking of God, or endeavouring to make him his friend; yet there was no distinction betwixt those that came early and those that came late. It was only the sincerity with which we seek for God's mercy.

He added, " Perhaps I do it out of complaisance to you." To which I replied, that I could scarce believe this, because he shed so many tears, and was so sorry and so much concerned.

After some consideration, he said: " Of what use would it be to me? No, (here he took me by the hand,) it is not out of complaisance to you." He then said: " I remember that in the instruction of christianity, which I received in my younger days, I was told, a christian ought to die with the utmost cheerfulness and confidence. But I am so anxious about doubts. They return al-

ways again, notwithstanding I endeavour to remove them, and will not let them gain ground."

I suspected, and found afterwards but too justly, that he was throwing out a hint about some strange inward feelings, which some christians pretend to have, as indisputable signs and consequences of their being pardoned before God. I therefore told him, that such inward feelings, if there ever were things of that kind, could not be looked upon as absolutely necessary, and as things which must inevitably follow. I knew many sincere christians that were without them; and I myself, though conscious of being a christian, had never perceived them.

He interrupted me, by saying: "I myself saw a pious man dying, who left this world in great anxiety."

I continued, Good Count, that ease of mind which I wish you, when you are dying, and which it is possible you may attain, does not consist in a visible joy; it is rather a certain tranquillity of the soul, which arises from a conviction, that we have fulfilled all those conditions which God has laid down as the only ones for our receiving his pardon.

"How tottering," said he, "has been my former system, and how sure was I, nevertheless,  
of

of its truth! I was resolved, that if I should die, I would adhere to my principles; I would suppose them to be indisputable, and would let death approach without any further scrutiny. And for this very reason, I had begged to be excused from seeing any clergyman."

"You see from this, good Count, replied I, what a difference there is between truth and error. What you mentioned, were your sentiments about eight days ago. And now you read Jerusalem's work with the greatest assiduity, though he contradicts your principles every where.

"Oh!" said he, "it is an incomparable book; pray bring me the other volumes." How sorry was I, that then only one volume was published. "Could you not," continued he, "give this book to be read by some of my friends, who think of religion as I did, and were perhaps induced to it by my example and conversation?" I promised I would look out for such opportunities.

I now wanted to conduct him further into christianity, with whose moral side he was to be first made acquainted; for, as to the dogmatical part he knew already more of it, though he thought it impossible to believe its mysteries. However, I was sure, that even here, he would  
become,



become a believer, if he was first convinced of the excellency of the morals Christ has preached, and if the mysteries of christianity were laid before him, as Scripture proposes them, separated from human explications. To make him conversant with the precepts of the Gospel, I thought it best to let him read the history of Christ. I told him, I wished that he might learn from the moral character of Christ, that he was a good and divine man, and one that deserves great credit. Perhaps it may prepossess you in his favour, when I tell you, that even Voltaire, inclined as he is to calumniate Christ, does justice to his moral character. “ Does he ? ” replied the Count. I will read to you, continued I, some passages from the *Evangile du jour*, which no doubt is a work of Voltaire. I added, that Rousseau was quite charmed with Christ’s morals, and his death. He remembered to have found something of this kind in his *Emile*. I might recommend to you, continued I, the New Testament, to read the history of Christ ; but I chuse to decline this at present, since it is dispersed through all the four Evangelists, and since many places are wrongly translated, and many more, on account of their reference to the manners of the times and people, and the situation of places, might be obscure to you ; and since you yourself, probably, have

abused some Scripture expressions, to ridicule and to make a jest of them. " Yes," said he, " you are in the right." I promised therefore, to bring to him the history of the three latter years of the life of Christ, as it is properly compiled, regulated, explained, and told in a modern stile.

Cramer \* had desired me to give his compliments to the Count, and to tell him, that Count Bernstorff had forgiven him, and that he, in the latter days of his life, was very much concerned about the salvation of *his* soul. He asked: " Has Bernstorff lived to hear of my being arrested?" Yes, said I, he died about a fortnight ago. He burst out into tears again, and desired me to tell Cramer, that he wished to be worthy of his memory, and that he was obliged to him for his intelligence.

I left him to-day Gellert's Lectures on Morality †. He had almost finished Reimarus's book. During my absence, he always employed the greatest part of his time in reading those books which I had brought him.

\* This eminent divine is now living at Lubeck. He was formerly chaplain at the court of Copenhagen.

† These *Lectures on Morality*, read in the university of Leipzig, by the late Mr. Gellert, were translated last year into French. See the Appendix to the 47th volume of the *Monthly Review*, page 508.

*The fifth Conference. March the tenth.*

**I** FOUND the Count reading Gellert's Lectures on Morality, about whose excellency he did not know how to express himself properly. He said :

“ Had I but a year ago read such books in retirement from dissipation, I should have been quite another man. But I lived as in a dream. However, where are such christians as are here described ? ”

I told him that I believed Gellert himself to have been such a christian as is described in the book, which was chiefly written, to shew that perfection a christian was to strive for. I reminded him of our agreement, to examine more minutely his moral conduct, in order to convince him more of the greatness of his sins, and the necessity of his repentance.

In a serious exhortation, I begged of him to act now with all sincerity ; and the Count then began :

“ I know very well that I cannot apologize for my actions. But for this very reason I wish the existence of eternity, because God, who knows exactly the complication of circumstances and the situation I have been in, will determine more

truly and justly the morality or immorality of my actions, than men ever can do."

I now delineated the outlines of his character as I had reason to think it to be. God, said I, has given you not a common understanding, and, as I believe, a good natural disposition of heart; but through voluptuousness, ambition and inconsiderateness, you have corrupted yourself. He confirmed my conjectures, and added :

"That voluptuousness had been his chief passion, which had contributed most to his moral depravity."

We will begin, said I, with this passion, and see to what sins it has led you. After describing how far it was extravagant, the Count owned with great emotion of heart,

"His opinion had always been, that he lived for no other purpose but to procure himself agreeable sensations. He had reduced every thing to this point, and if now and then he had done something good, he had never considered it as an obligation of charity or of obedience towards God, but as a mere means to promote his own pleasure. In his very youth, he blindly had abandoned himself to all sorts of extravagancies. When he found the consequences of his irregular life, he endeavoured

to restore his health again by regularity and continence, in order to enjoy pleasure the longer. Having recovered health again, he indulged himself in irregularities of voluptuousness under a mild government of reason, and refrained himself from abandoned extravagancies. What humiliated him most, was, that he could not accuse any body that had seduced him, but that he must confess to have been his own seducer, by reading certain books, which he mentioned."

The more minute examination of his life in regard to this chief passion of his, I regulated according to certain questions. During the whole enquiry, he did not leave off crying. It seemed as if he felt a kind of ease, by intrusting me with the anxiety of his heart which he felt on account of this species of transgression. I will write the questions down in the manner I proposed them to him, and add those of his answers, which are more than a simple confession, and can contribute to clear up his former way of thinking, and serve to increase the abhorrence of the vice of lewdness.

How much time has by your eager pursuit of pleasures been squandered away, that might and should have been employed better?—He gave for answer,

“ I always imposed upon myself by thinking, because I could work very quick, and could dispatch the business of my different stations in life in less time than many others, that therefore the rest of my time ought to be dedicated to my pleasures, and was in a manner gained. But I see now too late, how much it was my duty to be officious in promoting good, according to that measure of talents God has trusted me with.”

How many good actions are left undone? and how insatiable have you been in your lust? How much have you meditated to procure yourself new sensual enjoyments?

“ To be overloaded with pleasures, is attended with an inevitable emptiness, and to fill up the vacancies makes us study variety of pleasures.”

How much did you neglect by this the improving and forming of your soul and heart? Remember the years you have spent at school and the university!

“ It kept me very backward, and not till late years did I begin to make myself acquainted with those things which I should have learnt at school. Being at the university, I lived now and then for whole months together in dissipation and extravagancies, but then I kept to my studies for a time again. Improving and forming my heart,  
I never

I never thought of before I was two or three and twenty years of age. Since that time I collected by degrees those principles of morality I informed you of."

How neglectful has your lust made you towards God, yourself, and other men, even in those duties which your particular station in life required of you ?

" I turned my thoughts very little towards God, and did not believe that I owed him any thing more, than a general gratitude for my existence. I might perhaps have often neglected the particular duties of my respective stations in life, for the sake of enjoying pleasures, but at other times I have as physician taken great pains about my patients."

Very likely you have, by the perpetual enjoyment of sensual pleasures, heated your fancy, and filled it with foul images, which perhaps disturb you still, and hinder your serious reflexions. In what a giddiness of lust have you lived, or rather not lived, but only dreamt ?

" When I now recollect, I find that my life has been but a dream. I remember to have done but little good, by which I might know that I really have lived."

How much has your lust degraded your dignity as a man, and ranked you among irrational creatures, whose pleasures consist only in that which is sensual ?

“ I thought myself no more than an animal, and believed there was no difference of species, but only of some degree of perfection between man and beast.”

Has not your character suffered very much by this ?

“ I always thought I need not to care what the world said. I therefore endeavoured to please but a few. But now I find how valuable a name is which is obtained by virtue.”

How indifferent has this made you towards moral pleasures, which are the most effectual springs to promote virtue, and are an essential part of real happiness ?

“ In my younger years I was quite indifferent towards good sentiments and actions. Afterwards, though I was perhaps pleased when I had done something which I thought to be good, yet I never made any distinction between this nobler joy, and the gratification of my lustful desires.”

How many has your voluptuousness ruined !—  
Your example, and the propagating of your prin-



principles, has seduced young men to profligacy. Many of them have lost their characters, ruined their constitution, and even met death in their pursuit of lustful pleasures. Perhaps destitute widows and orphan children, whose husbands and fathers were killed by profligacy which you taught them, are now crying to the all-knowing God against the author of their misfortunes !

He acknowledged, in a very repenting manner, he might be guilty of all these crimes. His expressions, his countenance, and his whole attitude seemed to beg of me not to go on any further. I continued :

Might you not have been the seducer of innocent young women, and might you not, on such occasions, have wilfully sacrificed to your voluptuousness, religion, honour, and virtue ? Might you not have ruined them in this world, by hindering their being married, and throwing them into contempt and poverty ?

“ I cannot deny that I have been a dangerous seducer. I often have deceived innocence by my principles. Even women of good sense I have conquered ; and more than this, I have made them afterwards easy again about their transgressions. None among those that I attacked was at last able to resist me, if she did not avoid  
me

me presently. I was never at a loss how to conquer; though I must say, I never promised any thing which I did not intend to perform. Notwithstanding I did all that laid in my power to keep those, who through my fault had been temporally ruined, from misery and poverty, I am, nevertheless, now convinced that this by no means can excuse me."

Perhaps there are children that do not know you to be their father, who for want of education will become a burden to society, and are in danger of being ruined in this and the future world.

Here he desired me to take upon me the care and education of a child, two years old, because it was his.

I scarcely had made enquiry, when I heard it was dead. I mention this as a proof of his sincerity. I continued:

And matrimonial ties, which according to the unanimous opinion of all nations should be sacred, I suppose you have broken. What an irreparable injury is hereby done to both parties!—and how much must this injustice have afflicted the injured party? Remorse of conscience on the side of the seduced persons was or will be the consequence thereof. Wherewith will you excuse yourself, if grief or despondency should be hurtful

ful to the health or the life of the injured? Is not matrimonial happiness and domestic peace frequently disturbed by these your transgressions?

“ The injured party, said he, had often never known of it, and in some instances he had rather promoted domestic peace by good advice, which he had given to the female criminal. He owned that he thought these excuses formerly sufficient, but he did not mention them now with the same intent.”

Perhaps, said I, honest fathers are obliged to maintain children, which they are convinced are not their own. Of what confusions, enmities, and law-suits may this be productive, even after your death, in families that might have remained happy, if you had left them undisturbed? Have you never used unnatural means to satisfy your voluptuous passions, or to prevent their disagreeable and unexpected consequences? He said:

“ In his younger years he had indulged himself in every thing his passion had driven him to, but as to the latter part of the question, he knew himself to be innocent.”—And this was the only accusation of our to-day’s scrutiny, to which he pleaded not guilty.

Now, continued I, what misery have all these extravagancies thrown you into? Forget for a  
little

little while that you have offended God extremely, by creating so much mischief in the world. Reflect rather on this question only, How has my lustful passion rewarded me, after having served it so faithfully? You are rewarded with transitory, disgustful joys, which never have satisfied your desires; with disdain, contempt, and reproaches of all sober people that knew of your wicked life; with imprisonment and fetters, with a premature and ignominious death.—Pray now, consider seriously, suppose I and every body were to live in this manner, what would become of human society?—He answered,

“ I foolishly persuaded myself, that it was consistent with society. The great ones in England and France, said I to myself, lead such unrestrained life.”

But, said I, does this unrestrained way of life of the great in England and France contribute towards the happiness of either nation? And can it be believed that they, in doing so, are more happy than people of the middle sort, that lead a life which is more strict and more solid? And lastly, are these great ones the whole society, or are they not the smallest part of it, and if numbers are to be considered, the most inconsiderable part?

During

During the whole time of this conversation, the Count was very much moved, and ready to cry. I saw how affecting and humiliating the scene of his past life was to him.

“ How is it possible, said he, that I could ever be so convinced of my former principles, and could ever forget myself so far !”

I recommended to him to search the whole course of his former life more minutely, and left him for this purpose further written instructions. I gave him likewise the two first parts of the three last years of the life of Christ. The Count then said :

“ That he valued the morals of christianity very much, and thought them truly divine ; but he was afraid the mysteries of religion might prevent his being fully persuaded of its truth, though he promised to spare no pains to get convinced.”

Upon this I told him, that the grace of God would assist his endeavours, and that his doubts would cease in time. He then started three objections : the first, why the immortality of the soul was not taught in the writings of Moses ? the second, how Christ could be the Son of God ? and thirdly, how three persons could be in one Deity ? To the first I replied, that if it was agreed that

that in the writings of Moses no mention was made of the immortality of the soul, it did nevertheless by no means follow, that this doctrine was unknown to the Jews, or that the truth of it was less certain. And as for his second and third objections, I told him, that since their refutation is grounded upon right explanations of scripture passages, for which he was not yet prepared, I could only tell him this beforehand, that the words wherein these mysteries are revealed, must be cautiously explained, since they were more adapted to inform men of the existence of what is above their conception, than to express fully the nature of the mystery.

*The sixth Conference. March the twelfth.*

**I** Now conducted the Count to the second great source of his transgression, which, I thought, was his ambition. You had, said I, too great an opinion of your understanding, and of the goodness of your intentions, which at the bottom were but means to satisfy your chief passion. He replied :

“ He had been so weak, as to let himself be persuaded by a person that made too much of him, that his understanding was so great, that he  
could

could do every thing which was in the power of man. Helvetius, whom he had read much, had likewise induced him to believe this. For he says, that since the organisation of every man was the same, consequently every one was capable of doing the same thing another man could do. He had thought himself convinced of the goodness of his intentions, though he must own he had pursued principles which ought to be rejected, and that always the chief end he had in view was his pleasure."

I then put him in mind how many people he had made unhappy through his ambition; how unjust and hard he had been to satisfy this passion; how obstinately he opposed those that understood the affairs of state better than himself, even then when he knew he was in the wrong. What dangerous and violent means he had used to keep himself in his dignity, and to what danger he had exposed the subjects of the King, particularly the inhabitants of the metropolis. To this he replied,

"It was true, that he for his own safety had made regulations which he had not thought to be dangerous, since he knew instances wherein even the sight only of such preparations had prevented and quelled disturbances. But now, when he  
confi-

considered matters more coolly, he saw very well that he might have been the author of great mischief."

I desired him to consider, whether he had not made too free with the revenues of the state?—At how great an expence he had lived at last?—What an unconstitutional power he had arrogated to himself? &c.

The two chief passions of the Count, voluptuousness and ambition, being accompanied with great inconsiderateness, I reminded him of his inconsiderate treatment of religion, and how he had made a jest of the most serious things in the world, and studied perhaps to communicate his opinions to others. To which he gave for answer :

" He could not deny that religion had frequently been with him a subject of ridicule. But he had been guilty of this kind of inconsiderateness, mostly in the company of such persons as were already prejudiced against religion. He never had made it his business to make profelytes, though he had made no secret of his irreligion. He acknowledged himself in all this culpable before God and his conscience."

After several other questions, I asked the Count how he could presume to sit at the helm of  
 3 government,



government, when he knew himself by no means qualified for it, being without knowledge of the laws, and the language of the country, and never giving himself the trouble to learn either. I charged him with having given new laws inconsiderately, abolishing old ones without reason. I blamed him for having discharged old and approved of ministers of state, and chusing new ones, without knowing them, and trusting in them without being sure of their being honest men; only because he thought they would prove themselves to be his friends.

When I told him, that he never had cared for the morals of the nation, but rather promoted immorality by bad examples, by giving opportunities to do evil, and even by making laws tending to promote it, he said :

“ He always believed, that it belonged only to the clergy to mind the morals of the people. He judged of the sentiments of the nation by his own, and imagined that every one, like himself, looked upon pleasure and an unrestrained life as the only happiness.”

When I represented to him, that during his administration there was, especially in the metropolis, an entire stop to trade, he replied :

“ He had been sensible of that, and it was no matter of indifference to him, for he had been thinking how to open new ways to promote trade.”

When I asked him how it was possible for him to see the universal discontent, and to be sensible of it, to be cautioned by friends and foes, and nevertheless to neglect all this, he answered :

“ He had always made himself easy, by the hopes that this discontent would cease at last, and that the measures he had taken would keep him safe.”

Though all these reproaches were severe and very humiliating, the Count seemed, nevertheless, not to be offended by them. Now and then he would say some things in his excuse, which were nothing to me, because they did not relate to what I had in view, and which I was not a judge of. However, he was upon the whole full of repentance, though he thought he could apologize for some particular parts of his political conduct.

“ He expressed his anxiety, that he thought his repentance was not serious enough, or at least that he was more sorry on account of some transgressions than others.”

I answered,

I answered, this fear of his was a good sign, and a proof of the sincerity of his repentance. I reminded him of God's mercy towards him, since in his prison he had time and opportunity to consider his former actions, and to repent of his crimes. I asked what might have become of him, if an assassination had taken place, which he was so often threatened with, and which so easily could have been put into execution?

Since the last conference, the Count had read the two first parts of the history of Christ, and I enquiring how he liked *the man*? he said :

“ His morals and his personal conduct are excellent. The first are undoubtedly the best advice for men to make themselves happy in all situations of life. Here and there I found something which I did not understand, and which perhaps is to be explained from the manners and condition of those times. But I have met with many things that have affected me much. It has humiliated me to find here many good things, which I had learned in my youth from Scripture, and which I afterwards believed I owed to the reading of other books.”

When I enquired of him, if it was likely that a man whose life and morals were so excellent, and who acted so disinterestedly (“ and, as he

added himself, who sacrificed his life to confirm the truth of what he preached") was capable of imposing upon the world by false miracles, he answered :

“ No ! it is quite improbable.”

I then told him that there are two ways to get convinced of the truth of the christian religion. The first and the more sure one, was a constant practice of Christ's precepts. By this a man may be convinced by his own experience of the excellency of his religion. The other was, a candid examination whether Christ had proved himself to be a true messenger of God, by delivering a doctrine which was worthy of God, and by performing undoubted miracles. As to the doctrine, he had owned already that it was really divine; and if the greatest of his miracles, his resurrection, could be proved, it followed in course, that the rest of his miracles were true, or at least could be so. I told him it was necessary for him to examine the evidences in behalf of this miracle himself; and for this purpose I should give him a book which was written by a deist, who was induced to turn christian after examining the resurrection of Christ.

The Count seemed to be greatly pleased by this; and I left him with sanguine hopes, after  
I had

I had given him the third and fourth parts of the Life of Christ.

*The seventh Conference. March the fourteenth.*

General Lieutenant Holben, the commander of the castle where the Count was prisoner, told me, that since my last visit he had been very uneasy: That he frequently on a sudden started from the couch upon which he used to lie during the whole time of his imprisonment: That he had been sitting for half an hour together, hanging down his head, buried in deep thoughts, and sobbing had shed a great many tears. When I entered the prison, I found him reading Gellert, and reading indeed I always found him whenever I came.

“ I must be quite deprived of all my reason, said he, if I did not own, that I should have lived as this book teaches me. Oh! had I but read such books in the days of my prosperity, I am sure they would have convinced and reformed me.”

His countenance expressed great concern, shame and uneasiness. And when I asked him how he did, he replied:

“ I am very uneasy since yesterday. I cannot seriously enough repent of having led so bad a life,

and having acted upon such wicked principles, and used means so detrimental. My present condition, and even my death do not concern me so much as my base actions ! And it is quite impossible to make any reparation for what I have done to the world.—Pray, my dear friend, do not be tired, and do not leave me.”

Though I had the greatest compassion towards him, yet I thought I had not reason enough at present to make him quite composed. But when he seemed to be afraid his repentance might be too late, I comforted him in this respect, and promised to shew myself his friend to the very last. My intention by this visit was to give him opportunities to recollect his former life, and to point out to him the way for a serious repentance ; but the uneasiness I found him in, would not allow me to act so seriously as I intended. Among other subjects which we were talking upon, was the pain and grief which he had caused to his honest parents from his earlier days, and now in particular towards the latter end of his life. I entreated him to consider how often he had offended them by his disobedience and obstinacy, and made them grieve about his open contempt of all religion.—What anxiety, continued I, must you have caused to these venerable persons, by those inconsiderate steps you have taken during

your residence in this metropolis!—Every news of the too hasty increase of their son's prosperity, of the means he got at it, and the use he made of his power, must have struck a kind of deadly terror into them!—They must have trembled every day on account of the danger which threatened their son; and into what an unspeakable grief must your sudden fall have thrown them!—How dreadful must their expectation be on account of the issue of your affairs, and the danger your soul is in!—How humiliating to them will be the manner of your death! Will they ever be comforted, and might it not shorten their lives? And who is the author of all this? are not you, their son!

I had had, for several days, a letter of the father \* of the unfortunate Count in my pocket, and I thought this moment the properest to deliver it. The whole letter is as follows :

“ I could

\* The accounts which are given in news papers and magazines of the father of Count Struensee being so imperfect, and full of misrepresentations, the translator, who is personally acquainted with him, will give here a short sketch of his life. D. Adam Struensee, the father of the Count, was born in the year 1708, at New Ruppın, a small town, in the dominions of the King of Prussia. He was soon sent to the grammar school at Brandenburg, where he was till the year 1727, when he went to the university at Halle, which he exchanged the following year for that of Jena. In the year 1730 the Count of Witgenstein made him one of his chaplains at Berleburg. He was but one year in this station before he

“ I could wish that these lines, if possible, may reach you, that you may read and consider. The me ancholy, grief, and anxiety of your parents, on

was chosen rector of a parish in the suburbs of Halle, in Saxony. He quitted this living but a few months after for another rectory in the city of Halle, which he likewise gave up soon after, another living in the same city being offered to him, and of which he accepted. He then was made professor in divinity of the University, in which capacity of professor and rector he got a great name, and became very eminent, and much beloved. In the year 1757, the late King of Denmark gave him the principal rectory at Altona, and appointed him president of the ecclesiastical consistory of Altona and the county of Pinneberg. His talents and merits promoted him in the year 1760 to one of the most eminent preferments in the Lutheran church, for he became president of the ecclesiastical council, general-superintendent (or bishop) of the two dukedoms Schleswig and Holstein, to which are annexed the deanries of Gottorp, Rendsburg, Husum, and Schwabsted. He now, at this very time, enjoys all these preferments, and his fixed residence is at Rendsburg, a fortified town in Holstein, where the translator visited him in the year 1766. He is a very personable, tall man, has a serious countenance, is a good pulpit orator, whose discourses are more calculated for edification than for shining eloquence. He has the promoting of practical religion particularly in view. Many are his writings and publications, which are mostly calculated for the same purpose. He married, in the year 1732, Mary Charles, only daughter of John Charles, then physician in ordinary to the Count of Witgenstein, a lady of singular merit, virtue and piety. It is said, that the fate of her sons affected her so much, that she lately died of grief. She was mother of eight children.

1. Elisabeth, born 1733, and married to a clergyman at Brandenburg.

2. Charles August, born 1735. He was professor of mathematics at Lignitz, in Silesia. His brother, the Count, called him in 1771 into Denmark, and made him counsellor of justice. He was made prisoner of state with his brother, but afterwards set at liberty again. He has published a well written treatise on fortification.

3. John



on account of their sons\*, I am not able to express. Our eyes swim in tears, day and night. Our souls cry for mercy to God without ceasing. But I will speak no more of this. There is but one thing which lies heavy upon my mind, and that

3. John Frederick, the unhappy Count, whose name will be recorded in the annals of Denmark, was born the fifth of August, 1737, at Halle. He was educated in the schools of the famous orphan house of D. Franke, and in the university at Halle, where he studied physic. He went with his father to Altona, where he soon became royal physician of the counties of Ranzau and Pinneberg, and procured himself by his profession and industry a moderate independency. In the year 1768, the fifth of April, the King of Denmark appointed him to be his physician in ordinary, who was to attend him during his travels through Germany, England and France. This laid the foundation of his following prosperity. He got intimately acquainted with the young monarch, was always about him, and insinuated himself into his particular favour. He was made *Lecteur Royal*, and in 1769, the 12th of May, actual counsellor of state. In 1770, the 19th of May, he was appointed counsellor of conference, and *Maitre de requetes*; and in July, 1771, he became prime minister. The same month he was raised to the dignity of a Danish Count, and the Queen invested him with the order of Matilda. In 1772, the 17th of January, he became prisoner of state, and lost his life the 28th of April.

4. Samuel Adam, born 1739, lives with his father.

5. Mary, born 1744, is married to a clergyman at Shleswig.

6. Harriet, born 1745, died very young.

7. Christian, born 1746.

8. Gothilf, born 1752. He studied at Gottingen, but the Count, his brother, called him from thence, and made him lieutenant in the King's guards. He was likewise arrested, but set at liberty again under condition of quitting the Danish dominions.

\* It must be remembered, that two brothers of the Count were likewise arrested with him.

that of your much afflicted mother. You know our sentiments. You know our intention when we educated you. You remember how often and how seriously we inculcated this great truth, that godliness is profitable unto all things.

As often as I had occasion to speak to you, even then, when you were in a public character, I reminded you of the omnipresent God, and exhorted you to be careful in preserving a good conscience. Your own heart will tell you, how far you have lived up to the exhortations of your father.

It is already a long while that your parents have been in great anxiety about you. Since we lead a retired life, and have very few acquaintance, and you yourself have written nothing about your circumstances, the prayers and sighs of our straitened hearts have ascended to God in secret, and in our anxiety we cried, that your soul might not be lost. Three different times, at Halle, Gledern, Altona, you were looked upon as a dead man, by those that stood about your sick bed. God has saved you and preserved your life: Certainly with that only intent, to prepare you in this time of grace for an happy eternity. The same is now the chief intention of your gracious Redeemer, in your prison. You are  
his

his creature, he loves you, you are redeemed by the blood of Jesus. God is a reconciled father. You are baptized in the name of the Trinity. He will make an everlasting covenant with you, and he will not desist from doing good to you. Return to your God, my son, he will not hide his face of grace from you. Mind the voice of your conscience, and the conviction which the Spirit of God produces in your soul. Pray to God that he may disclose to you the true inward state of your soul, that you, enlightened by God, may see how much you are corrupted. Employ the solitude you are in now, to search your whole life in the sight of the all-knowing God, that you may see how great and how detestable your sins are. Do not flatter yourself: Be rigorous with yourself. Accuse yourself and judge yourself before the tribunal of God, whilst you are still enjoying this time of grace.

When you shall feel your sins to be a heavy burden, your heart then will humiliate itself before God, you will pray for mercy, and you will seriously detest and abhor your transgressions. You then will see the great importance and necessity of the redemption of Christ. You then will take refuge in him who receives sinners, who was made to be sin for us, who has paid the debts of our sins, and suffered their punishment, that  
we

we might be made the righteousness of God in him, and might have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Still the blood of Christ speaks for you. He that is merciful, still stretches forth his hands. Without Jesus there is no salvation. He is the cause of it. Even for your sake he has received gifts. You may have in him righteousness for your peace of mind and for your sanctification. O that Jesus might be glorified in your heart. In him we have happiness whilst we live, whilst we suffer, whilst we die, and after death.

Your mother gives her love to you. She weeps,—she prays with me, for our unfortunate sons. My son, my son, how deeply do you afflict us! Oh! could we but have this only comfort, that our sons turned with all their heart unto the Lord, and that we with joy might find them again in eternity before the throne of the Lamb!

Your crimes, which brought you into prison, are not properly and sufficiently known to us. What is talked of and read in public about you, is of such a nature that your parents condemn and detest it. Oh! I wish to God, you had remained a physician. Of your rise to honours we were informed by the news papers; but it was

no matter of joy to us; we read it with grief. Oh! that you had kept, in all your transactions, a clear conscience with much wisdom, piety, and humility, for the good of Denmark, and that you might have submitted with all due subjection, to all the commands of your Sovereign. We cannot altogether judge about this matter for want of information. But know, that tho' we love our children, we nevertheless do not approve of their crimes, nor will we excuse or palliate them, or call them good; we rather hate all sins, detest, condemn, and abhor them, and praise God when he manifests his just wrath over the wicked, and shews his mercy to the repenting and the faithful. The Lord our God be your physician in your imprisonment, and cure thoroughly the wounds of your soul.

We your parents recommend you to the love of the Lord that has mercy on you. May Jesus, who is a compassionate High-priest, remember you for good at the right hand of God, that you may receive mercy before the throne of grace, and be pardoned unto everlasting salvation. Yea, Jesus! thou great friend of mankind, who wilt in no wise cast out him that comes to thee, help parents and children to life everlasting!"

*Reidburg, Merck the 4th, 1772.*

When I told the Count that I had a letter from his father to him, he took it with a kind of eagerness, and began to read. But he had not half finished it, when he laid it down, weeping bitterly. Looking then at me with an air of confidence, he said, "It is impossible for me to read any further; I will begin again by and by."

My answer was, Read it by yourself, and read it often. It is a letter of an honest, afflicted, and tender parent. Endeavour to comfort your virtuous father and your pious mother, by a christian-like answer. You know very well what alone can comfort them.

"Oh! my God," said he, in a manner which cannot be expressed, "I cannot write to them, I do not know how I shall act!"

You will have time, replied I, to consider about this.—He afterwards praised his father for being an honest man, whose actions agreed with his sentiments, and his mother for being a matron, that deserved reverence and was really pious. He said, she had given him the best opportunity to learn by her own example, practical christianity. He begged of me, "To write soon to his parents, to tell them the whole truth how I found him, and to assure them that he would do his best, and had the best intention, to  
die

die like a christian.”—He was so much affected, that he was scarcely able to pronounce these words.

I had now given him opportunities enough for self-examination. His repentance was really sincere, and I could trust in it so much the more, as he was a man of cool blood, and one who, through principles and practice, had obtained great power over his passions, and who certainly could not have been moved by any thing else, but by serious remonstrances of his conscience. I reminded him of that hope, which he formerly had entertained, that God would shew him mercy on account of his philosophical repentance. I desired him to tell me whether he thought this still to be true? He hardly knew what to answer, but at last, he said: “I feel it too much, that I have no grounds for such a hope. I am no more inclined to deceive myself.”

I now wanted to make him acquainted with the proofs of christianity; for which purpose, I had brought him West’s Observations on the History and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. I desired him to read with attention. And if he should find, that there was the greatest credibility in the history of the resurrection of Christ, he then should ask his reason, whether he had no obligation

gation to believe him, that was risen, to be a messenger of God to men, and his doctrine to be true and divine?

*The eighth Conference. March the 16th.*

**M**Y first question was: Is it probable that sins should be punished in a future world which were committed wilfully, which were often repeated, and which were terrible on account of their consequences?

He answered, "That if one looked upon it with mere reason, it should seem probable that the uneasiness of conscience and the natural consequences of sins, were sufficient for their punishment."

Many reasons being produced on my side, and among the rest, that many went out of this world without any remorse of conscience at all; the Count gave his objection up. And when I, at the conclusion of those arguments which are in favour of rewards and punishments, proposed the question: Why even a sinner who disapproves of all religion, is at least then afraid, when he sees certain death before his eyes?

The Count said: "It might perhaps be nothing else but that natural fear of death which  
is



is common to all." But he found afterwards this objection removed by his own experience ; for he owned he was now less afraid on account of his death than of his sins. However, he believed he should have died with very little fear, even if we had not got acquainted, and he had not read those books I brought him.

When I endeavoured to prove that mere repentance is not sufficient to satisfy divine justice respecting our crimes, and asked what he would think of a judge who should pardon every criminal when he shewed signs of a serious repentance ; he answered, " he should think him to be a good man though a weak one, who was neither just nor wise, and unfit to be a judge."

Upon this, I undertook to convince him that mere repentance, or reparation of damages, or reformation of life, were insufficient to expiate our sins before God : I concluded, that these three mentioned means, which reason recommends for obtaining pardon, are insufficient.

I afterwards told the Count, that though he could not repair the damages he had done, because he was so near eternity, he nevertheless could still do something which resembled, in some respect, a reparation ; and this was, that he should endeavour to efface those bad impres-

sions he had made upon the minds of the people, by shewing himself now quite a different man in his conversation and his whole behaviour. The Count assured me, “ that he himself already had thought this to be his duty. He had spoken to an officer about the moral doctrines of christianity, and exhorted him to obey them strictly. But he had not spoken like a fully-convinced christian, for he was none yet, and he thought he had no right to play the hypocrite.” He added, “ that he heartily wished he could only contribute something towards the reformation of those of his friends, whose morals and sentiments he had corrupted by his example and by his conversation.”

When I had proved that faith in Christ was the only way for reconciliation, I enquired of him how he had found the evidences of Christ’s resurrection.

“ You know,” answered the Count, “ that for some days past my mind has been very uneasy and my body sick. I confess both have hindered me from reading that part of the book with sufficient attention, which examines and compares the circumstances of the resurrection of Christ. However I have found in the latter part the following arguments, which have made a  
great

great impression upon my understanding. The disciples of Christ were not credulous, but were with difficulty convinced of the resurrection of Christ by the unanimous testimony of all their senses. The Jews never examined the affair judicially, though they had the best opportunity for it, and it was their interest to shew it was fictitious. I likewise look upon the propagation of christianity as another argument of the truth of Christ's resurrection; for if it had not been certain that Christ had risen, christianity could not have spread so quick and so far as it has done. The doctrine of Muhamed is in regard to its propagation not to be compared with christianity. However, I could wish to know, whether any testimonies for Christ's resurrection are to be met with in heathen authors."

I told him, that Suetonius, Tacitus, Plinius, and Josephus made mention of Christ, though there was a dispute about the passage of the latter being genuine.

"I cannot deny," said the Count, "that Christ's resurrection seems to be probable; but it appears to me a little odd, that he, after his resurrection, did not shew himself to his enemies."

This objection I endeavoured to remove, by shewing that such a testimony would have been

of no use, and would never have convinced the Jews, on account of their obstinacy.

The Count being exhorted to pray, he assured me that he already frequently prayed. And when he repeated his complaint that his repentance on account of some actions, and in relation to some persons, was greater than on account of others, I told him, that this was very natural ; that he always would find himself more concerned on account of the misfortunes he had brought upon his friends, his parents, his brothers, and Count Brandt.

After some silence, he said : “ I do not know whether error and passion might not carry me away a second time, in case I should enter the world again. But such as I find myself now, I detest my extravagancies, even those which gave me pleasure ; and I believe that in case I had an opportunity of indulging myself again, I should not commit them.”

When I exhorted him not to commit any wrong action which he was in his present circumstance capable of doing, and desired him to be upon his guard against telling any untruth before his judges, or apologizing for himself when he had no ground for it, or concealing what was true, he answered :

“ I know

“ I know that by a sincere confession, I gain in the opinion of honest men. I am convinced that all my future happiness, which I now hope to obtain, would be lost if I should attempt to conceal the truth. I even believe, according to the morals of Christ, that a lie, though told with a good intent of promoting christianity and virtue, would be culpable. You therefore may depend upon my telling without reserve every thing I shall think myself guilty of.”

When I took my leave of him, he said : “ I see how much you are concerned about my salvation ; that you love me, and as a sincere friend want to promote my real good. I look upon you as my only true friend in the world. When shall I see you again ? I am longing for you when you are not here ?”—I replied,

The day after to-morrow you will certainly see me again ; but the nearer the time draws that shall decide your fate, the more frequently I shall visit you, and stay longer with you.

He smiled and said : “ I hope you will not fall sick.”

I gave him to-day *Bonnet's philosophical Examination of the Arguments of Christianity.*

*The ninth Conference. March the eighteenth.*

**I** NOW recommended Scripture to the Count. The New Testament, said I, gives the most perfect information, and the Old Testament agrees with the New, particularly in that chief point of man's redemption. I pointed out and explained several passages of the prophets which correspond with the evangelists, and drew the inference, that even this must prepossess us greatly in favour of the truth of the Gospel history. The Count replied :

“ If one had a mind to entertain suspicion, one might say Christ had formed himself after the character of the Messias, as it was drawn by the prophets, to act the part of this great personage.”

I answered : If he had had a mind for doing this, he would have acted his part consentaneous with the prejudices of the Jews, and appeared in the character of a worldly hero.

“ To be sure, (was his answer) he then would have employed quite different means. It is impossible for an impostor to act thoroughly the part of an honest man. Besides, there are prophecies, which, in regard of their being fulfilled,  
did

did not depend entirely upon Christ. For instance: the casting lots over his garments, and his being crucified. One as well as the other depended on accidental circumstances. If the Romans had not been at that time masters of Jerusalem, he might not have been crucified, but rather been stoned to death."

We examined hereupon those Scripture passages which treat on the redemption of men by Christ. I endeavoured to prove that this redemption, as it is taught in Scripture, does not contradict any of God's attributes, but is in all respects adapted and suitable to the condition of men.—This being done, after it had taken up much of our time, I entreated the Count most earnestly to get convinced of this chief doctrine of christianity, that there is no salvation without Christ, and to adopt it for his own everlasting welfare. He said, "he should raise no difficulties, but should do as much as he could to get convinced of a doctrine which must be of so great importance to him. He had no other hopes but from this quarter only, and why should he therefore not be desirous of partaking thereof?"

I found him at once greatly moved again. He complained with tears in his eyes—"that

his old idea of a total annihilation of our whole existence after death, would return now and then and make him uneasy."

I told him it was very difficult to eradicate old ideas we were formerly so much pleased with: But I hoped he would always get the better of them, if he kept those arguments in view which he had found convincing in those books he had read upon this subject.

He then asked me: "If I never had entertained any doubts about eternity?" No! was my answer; I always found it suitable to my wishes. I got early acquainted with its proofs.

Upon the Count's complaining that he still was afraid his repentance might not be sincere enough; I advised him to do just such actions as were opposite to his former vices, and to mind every opportunity which was left for him of doing good. I said I would propose something to him. The proposal was, that since he was very sorry for having many of his former friends prepossessed against religion by communicating to them his principles, he should renounce these principles publicly. He should give an account to the world of the sentiments in which he intended to die, and of the manner they took place.



“ This is what I shall do,” replied he; “ I will consider in what manner I could draw this up to make it most useful.”—Lastly he wished, “ that he might have a lively sensation of the comfort of religion:” He said, “ he prayed heartily to God for it.” I told him, God would grant him his wishes, and it would follow in course the more he got convinced of the truth of the christian religion, and of the sincerity of the alteration in his sentiments.

He answered: “ I hope to get convinced. I formerly thought that whoever embraced christianity was to renounce all reason; but I now see plainly, that nothing stands more to reason than christianity; and I promise you, that I will do my utmost to make my sentiments conformable to the will of God.”

I then continued: Your mind will grow easy, and you will feel the comforts of the Gospel. But, nevertheless, you may feel anxiety and fear towards the latter end of your life, and upon the way to the scaffold. I tell you this before-hand, lest you may think religion could not comfort us when we are to die. Natural fear of death, the terrifying circumstances your's will be attended with, and your being conscious that you by your crimes brought yourself to it, will not  
be

be altogether removed. But by the assistance of religion, you will have a calm and hopeful prospect into eternity.

He had now finished Bonnet's book which I had left with him, and declared it had given him great satisfaction. And since Rousseau had been his favorite author, and I feared his objections against Christ's miracles might appear to him of consequence, I gave him *Clapereau on the miracles of the Gospel*, to let him see how weak Rousseau's objections are against facts.

*The tenth Conference. March the twentieth.*

MY intention by this conference was to convince the Count that reason could make no objections of any consequence against the doctrine of the redemption of the world by Christ.

“ I myself,” said the Count, “ have been thinking already on this subject. Perhaps God will try our intentions towards his precepts, by demanding our faith in favour of this doctrine of redemption. And if this should be the case, it is a sufficient reason for us to believe it.”

Hereupon I proved that the doctrine of redemption glorifies the divine perfections, and is abso-

absolutely necessary to human happiness. At the conclusion of my arguments I entreated the Count to profess himself a christian by believing in Christ. Cease, said I, good Count, to be an unhappy man. Believe in Jesus, and your sins will be forgiven you. Your death will open you the door into a blessed eternity.

Here ensued a scene which was moving to me beyond description. Never felt I such joy. Never have I been so sure of the happiness of having brought back a sinner from his errors ! I shall never forget this solemn and joyful hour, and never cease to praise God for it.

“ I should be guilty of the greatest folly,” said the Count, “ if I would not embrace christianity with joy, when its arguments are so over-balancing, and when it breathes such general benevolence. Its effects upon my heart are too strong. Oftentimes I cannot help crying when I read the history of Christ. I think already with hope on my death. I have acquainted myself with its most terrifying circumstances. I do not know how I shall be when the awful hour comes. At present I am not uneasy about it ; I find nothing that makes me anxiously wish for this life. I will confidently expect forgiveness of my sins through Christ. And to you, my dear friend,

friend, I am infinitely obliged that you have brought me so far."

I embraced him, and exhorted him to thank God for it. We prayed together.—

I would now have left him, but he begged of me to stay half an hour longer, which I did.

He complained that his former idea, that there perhaps was no eternity, now and then returned to him; (and in fact it did not leave him entirely until a few days before his death.) He said, with a kind of indignation and grief: "Sometimes I think again; suppose my former idea was true, that we have no existence after death? But I comfort myself by thinking, that I abhor this idea; and that I am sensible it would be a very unhappy prospect if all my wishes and expectations of futurity should be vain. I tremble when this melancholy thought disturbs me, and I arm myself against it by recollecting the various convincing proofs which are alledged in favour of christianity as well as of a future state. I am now fully determined to follow the same rule in my new principles which I had laid down in regard to my former ones. For my intention was, to think on the approach of death in the following manner: I have examined my idea that every thing ceases with this life, and  
I have

I have found it to be true. Therefore, if I should die, nothing shall make me think otherwise; and I will die with a confidence, that, in case I should be wrong, God is a benevolent being who will forgive my error. But I see now that my former notions of God's mercy are unworthy of the Supreme Being. I have now examined christianity with greater exactness than I ever did my old system, and by this examination I am convinced of its truth. I therefore will remain firm. Neither my old system, nor new doubts, shall henceforth stagger me."

He then, after some questions about the inspired writers, told me, that he now was frequently reading the Bible since I had given him one. He said, "he should like to know what reasons there were to believe the sacred books were really written by those authors to whom they are ascribed."

For this very purpose I had brought with me, D. Lefs's \* book on the truth of the christian religion. I desired him to read it, and he would find sufficient historical proofs to believe that the books of the New Testament were really

\* The Truth of the Christian Religion, by D. Lefs, Professor and Doctor of Divinity at Gottingen. Bremen, 1768. 8vo.

really the writings of those evangelists and apostles to whom they were attributed.

He told me after this, that he frequently prayed to God to enlighten and confirm him in truth. He added, "I am sure God will hear my prayers and bless my endeavours."

*The eleventh Conference. March the 21st.*

I FOUND him reading D. Less's book on the truth of the christian religion, and he said : "It was something remarkable that there were so very few evidences in the first century of the authenticity of the books of the New Testament." To which I replied, that it was owing partly to the books of the New Testament having been written either about the middle, or towards the end of the first century, and that for this very reason but very few copies could be taken; partly that there were but few writers of the first century that had an opportunity of mentioning any thing concerning the authenticity of the writings of the apostles.

The Count said further : "That from the short mention made in this book of the chief deistical writings, he found that the objections against revelation were but very trifling, and  
that

that he was ashamed of having suffered himself to be imposed upon by such insignificant objections. He never imagined that christianity was founded upon such strong arguments, and that they would convince him."—He then spoke much in praise of those books he had read during his imprisonment; particularly of Gellert's Lectures on morality. He wished that those who had been seduced by him from virtue might read them. He said, he had in this respect Count Brandt particularly in view, and added; "I hear that he still is very gay, but I imagine it would make a great impression upon his mind if he was told how my sentiments are altered. Though he has not been more virtuous than I have, yet he always had a better opinion of religion than I had. Would you be so kind as to go to him, and tell him how you find me, and beg him to be now at last a little more serious? Or would you rather write to him?"

I answered, there are difficulties both ways, which may be avoided if you will charge the clergyman who attends Count Brandt with this message. Are you ready and inclined to do this?

"Yes," said he, "bring the Dean Hee to me, I will beg this favour of him in your presence. I am not ashamed to confess what I am  
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so well convinced of. I wish I had an opportunity to tell it to all my former acquaintance."

Here he told the truth, for hitherto he had said nothing to the officers who guarded him; but now he began to entertain them frequently with religious conversations. He said: "that he had been recommending religion and a virtuous life to an officer, and his answer was: He had nothing to say against religion; but to obey its precepts in regard to sensual pleasures and lusts, seemed to him impracticable. He then, by quoting his own example, shewed him how necessary he himself had now found these things to be, and how unhappy they had made him. He had intreated him to read Gellert often, who would convince him how useful it was to conquer even our favorite sins."

He added: "What difference is there between that virtue which christianity demands, and that which the world calls an honest life? If mere worldly people, that think in the same manner as I have done formerly, should judge of my actions according to their system of morality, I believe they would think them to be honest enough, as I did formerly myself."

You



You must even now, said I, take great care not to think too well of some of your actions ; to which he replied :

“ I know very well that respecting all my actions, which I thought to arise from good intentions, ambition and voluptuousness had as great a share in them as my love towards that which is good. I count them nothing before God and my conscience. When in my former situation, I fancied to act well and deserving of praise, I thought like the Pharisee in the Gospel.”

From this time, I observed in the Count, a certain calmness and serenity of mind, which seemed to arise from the hopes that God for Christ's sake would pardon him. This situation of his mind had been particularly visible to his judges in his last examination. They had not seen him since the time I had visited him, and could therefore better observe the alteration, than I, who had conversed with him so often during this time. One of them told me, that he had behaved on his examination extremely well, and had appealed once with a visible joy to that blessed eternity he hoped to enter into. He had been among them as among his friends, and had talked about his affairs as one who speaks about

indifferent things. His conduct had been very moving to them all.

But since it appeared to me as if he expected still a certain particular sensation of his being pardoned before God, I endeavoured to set him to rights in this point. I told him, that with regard to these sensations, the matter was very uncertain. I would not absolutely deny their existence, but I found no Scripture proofs that they were either necessary or to be expected as certain consequences of repentance and faith. The best and most certain conviction of our being pardoned before God was, to be conscious that we repent of our sins sincerely, that we acknowledge Christ to be our Redeemer, that we perceive our progress in godliness, and that we most earnestly endeavour to conform our sentiments and our actions to the will of God. Whoever thinks other sensations to be necessary, is in danger of being carried away by enthusiasm.

He then answered me, " That he never could bear enthusiasm in religion, and that this was one great reason that had made him averse from christianity." He said, " He remembered still, that once in that public school\*, where he had received his instruction in religion, some hun-

\* The Orphan-house at Hall.

hundreds of young people were at once given out to be illuminated and converted, though he himself was sure, that some of them, with whom he was nearly acquainted, were very immoral and wicked. Many strange things had been transacted by these converted boys; so that he and others that were not among the number, could not help being greatly scandalized on account of religion."—

I promised to bring him Spalding's book on the value of the inward feelings in Christianity; that he might inform himself more on this point.

*The twelfth Conference. March the 24th.*

**D.** HEE, whom I had told of the Count's desire to speak to him, came to-day with me. The Count was not ashamed to confess the mistakes of his understanding and his heart. He told the Dean minutely, how he had first quitted virtue and afterwards abandoned religion, and in what manner he had recovered from his errors. He expressed his fear, that his friend Count Brandt, through his natural vivacity, might be hindered from considering seriously on religion and the condition he was now in. But Count Brandt having always believed more of religion, than he himself, and shewn this even in his conversation, he hoped it would not only be agreeable

to him, to hear that he himself was now better informed and convinced, but that it would even make a happy impressiion upon his mind. Formerly he would not hearken to Count Brandt, when he wanted to speak to him about religion, but that he now thought it his duty to let him know his present sentiments. He looked upon himself so much more obliged to it, since he was accessary to his misfortunes.

The Count afterwards continued his conversation thus. " I have been reading the book of D. Lefs, particularly that part which treats on the miracles, reported to have been wrought at the tomb of the Abbé de Paris. I wonder why this affair, that has made so much noise at Paris, is not by command properly enquired into. I remember myself, when I was physician at Altona, that I was called upon to examine the state of a person that was subject to convulsions, by which means I saw the unexpected and wonderful effects which an extravagant fancy can produce. Such things as the pretended miracles of the Abbé de Paris, should not raise any doubts against the miracles of the Gospel. But I have other doubts, which appear to me of greater weight. However, I am resolved to think on them no more, for it is enough for me, after a calm examination, to have found the arguments for christianity

christianity unexceptionable. Would to God I had time to make myself further acquainted with it, and to put it into practice."

He complained that this morning, when he was reading the Gospel of St. Matthew, many blasphemies against Christ and the Virgin Mary came into his mind again, which he had formerly read in some deistical book. "Now," said he, "I despise such things, though formerly perhaps they might have raised scurrilous thoughts, and hindered my progress towards truth."

I brought him Spalding's book on the value of inward feelings in christianity \*. I told him, that I hoped the reading of it would make religion appear to him in a still more amiable light, when he found, how much it was adapted to the nature of the soul, and stood not in need of incomprehensibilities, of effects without a cause, of apparitions, concerning which it remains always matter of doubt, whether they are becoming the wisdom of God. He answered:

"This is what I hope likewise. Revelation must not contradict reason, since God has given it to rational beings. The more sound and solid

\* Thoughts on the value of inward feelings in Christianity. By John Joachim Spalding, Dean of Berlin. Leipzig. 1764. Second edit.

reason calls it under examination, the more must it profit by it. If those things which men have foisted into religion, were left out in the pulpit and dogmatical writings, almost all the weapons of the deists would become blunted. I remember very well how much many, perhaps well intended sermons, which I heard at Halle have confirmed my unbelief. It was too plain to me, that those things which were told me there could not be truths revealed by God, though it was confidently asserted that they were."

*The thirteenth Conference. March the 25th.*

**I** COULD stay but a short time with the Count. The following is the most remarkable part of our conversation :

" The Count mentioned some objections against christianity, which he had read in *Boulanger antiquité dévoilée*, that fear was the origin of all religion among the ancients. All calamities which could befall men, as earthquakes, fires, inundations, war, &c. they used to look upon as punishments of their gods, though they arose from natural causes ; and to appease the wrath of their deities they became to think of religion. He at that time believed Boulanger to have proved his assertions very clearly from history."

I told

I told him that Boulanger was a writer of no credit, authority, or knowledge, either in antiquity, history or languages. An idiot and a charletan. A man who told untruth, contradicted himself, &c. like another author who wrote the *Évangile du jour*, where he in one place proves, that there was no Moses, because an ancient writer Sanchoniaton did not make mention of him, though he lived in the neighbourhood where the history was transacted in which Moses was concerned. And in another place, in order to make Moses a writer of later date, it is asserted that Sanchoniaton lived long before him. To which the Count replied: “ That Voltaire was dangerous and captivating merely from wit and humour.”

When I was leaving the Count, he expressed his desire to inform in person Count Brandt of his present sentiments about religion, and to tell him of his reformation. He said, “ He should do this in the court of justice, if they should happen to be both confronted; but he doubted that this would not be the case, since their confessions agreed together. Therefore, he should beg leave to visit him, and to tell him the same before witnesses. If I were to tell it him myself, it would make a greater impression upon him; and his condition grieves me so much, that I would

willingly contribute all that is in my power towards his reformation."

*The fourteenth Conference. March the 26th.*

"**I** WISH," said he, when I came in, "to have done with those affairs I have now upon my hands; for they hinder the regular continuation of our conferences, and keep me from reading. However, I hope to finish them soon. I know, I want all my time for weightier concerns of my soul. Nevertheless I have finished D. Less, and I owe much to this book. It has brought my certainty to a higher degree, on account of the credibility of the miracles, and I can prove now the truth of the christian religion from miracles. The book is written with great solidity. The Germans begin to excell in this kind of writing."

I told him, we had another excellent original of this sort, D. Nosselt's Defence of the Christian Religion; which he, if time would permit it, might read with great advantage.

We then talked of some prophecies, which concerned not Christ in particular, but whole nations, how far they were fulfilled.

The calmness and serenity of the Count's mind increased now so much, that it appeared to me rather a little suspicious. I therefore thought it  
necessary



necessary to remind him, not to be carried away by a too quickly produced composure of mind, and not to forget, since he had hopes of being pardoned before God, what he had been before his conversion : else his former carelessness might gain power over him again, and obstruct his endeavours of conforming himself to the will of God, which might cause him a great deal of uneasiness towards the latter days of his life.

“ I assure you,” was his answer, “ that I have not for one moment judged myself indulgently, and that hitherto I have not ceased to repent of my former life seriously. I am rather convinced, that even in eternity, happy as it might turn out for me, I shall remember my sins with horror and detestation.”

On another occasion, he asked, what might be the reason that physicians were so easily prejudiced against religion ?

I know, said I, that the religion of physicians is commonly looked upon as suspicious ; but I think without reason. You yourself must know many great physicians that are, without contradiction, professed christians. Boerhaave, Stahl, Junker, Hofmann, Werlhof, were all christians. You are acquainted with Mead’s writings in favour of religion. Haller has but lately published

lished a book in behalf of christianity, which I should give you to read if it was to be had here already. Our Berger, what a professed, pious confessor of religion is he !

“ Zimmerman \* likewise, added he, is a christian. And you must, upon the whole, not think that I brought this thought upon the carpet as a thing of any real consequence. It is of as little signification as the opinion I have heard maintained, that Michaelis and Semler were deists.”

If they really were such, replied I, they hardly would give themselves so much trouble in promoting christianity as they really do. This no doubt is an accusation of intolerant christians, which is sufficiently refuted by the service which these men are of to religion.

*The fifteenth Conference. March the 27th.*

THE Count having shewed a desire to know something more about prophecies, and their being fulfilled, I brought him, for this

\* D. Zimmerman is physician in ordinary to his Britannic Majesty at Hanover. Some of his writings are lately translated into English, particularly his *Essay on National Pride*, and his *Treatise on the Dysentery*.

purpose, Newton's Dissertations on Prophecies, Among many things he said :

“ I find now of how great importance that moral rule is, to avoid the first sin. If we do not do this, but allow ourselves to delight in thinking of irregular desires, without opposing the first emotion of them, it is frequently afterwards no more in our power to act well and virtuous. I know this by my own experience. It seemed to me by far too severe, when Christ says, Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already in his heart. The looking on a woman, thought I, even with a desire to lust after her, can be no crime if it goes no further. But the ruminating upon means how to satisfy our desires, follow in course. Whenever I saw means to get my ends, I fancied it very hard if I should not make use of them. I did use them, I satisfied my lust, and committed a whole series of sins, which I might have escaped, if I had avoided the first sin, the taking delight in the wicked desire, and studiously entertaining it. I then endeavoured to apologize for my crimes. I cannot help it, said I, that my natural disposition and temper is so much for voluptuousness ; it therefore cannot be imputed to me as a crime if I live according to this my disposition. I was confirmed in this by that  
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overbearing severity of those who taught me morals in my youth. They never told me that Christ did not forbid innocent things, and that his morals did not deny us harmless joys. Every thing I had an inclination for, was told me to be sin, without distinction. To wear ruffles, to powder the hair, was declared to be as equally impious as other extravagancies which were openly sinful. I now concluded, that since it was impossible that the first mentioned things could be sins, and I found they could not be well avoided in the world, it perhaps might be the same case with the others ; they might also be innocent things, and not to be avoided. I know I was in the wrong ; but I was young, my passions raged, and my leaders should have had more understanding."

He added : " In the same manner much harm is done by those teachers of christianity who require always a blind obedience, and do not lay proofs before their hearers of that authority upon which they shall build their belief in adopting these truths.—He said it was necessary that a teacher should prove the Bible to be a divine revelation : and that whoever would take only proper time, and was not against the trouble of meditating, could never examine christianity without being convinced of its truth. Every  
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thing is naturally and well connected, and recommends itself to a mind given to reflexion. I never found in deistical writings a system so well connected ; and, upon the whole, I am inclined to believe that there is no such thing as a regular system of infidelity."

He continued ; " No objection can be made to christianity, because it promises rewards to its true professors. Love of God, without any relation to ourselves, is but a mere idea. I am sensible that I could not continue for a long while to love a friend, who shewed himself always cold towards me. And the Supreme Being cannot be displeased with a love, that minds at the same time our own interest : for God can reap no advantage from our inclination towards him, but only we ourselves. And why should we not look out for rewards and accept of them, when God himself has offered and promised them ?"

" My great delight in sensual pleasures persuaded me always, that as there was nothing of this kind among the joys of heaven, they would have no charms for me."

*The sixteenth Conference. March the 28th.*

“ I HAVE now finished,” said the Count, “ the Acts of the Apostles, and by this means am informed of the wonderful foundation of the church of Christ. It is very visible that a higher hand promoted this work. For otherwise, how could all this have been done in so short a time, by such persons as the apostles were, and in spite of such an opposition from all sides ? One thing rather raised my surprize. I found that Paul and Peter once did not quite agree. But when on the other side I perceived how much they agreed in the chief point of Christ’s resurrection, of repentance and faith, this matter no longer puzzled me. They were men, and therefore might be mistaken in their private opinions.”

“ Now and then,” said he, “ I cannot help thinking on my situation before my fall. This morning I asked myself, whether it would not have been better for me, if I could have kept myself in my high station, and enjoyed my usual pleasures ? But when I had been considering for a few minutes, I found that I now am by far more happy than I was in my greatest outward prosperity.

prosperity. I have frequently told my friend Count Brandt that I was by no means happy, when he believed me in many respects better off than himself. You cannot think what an infinite number of things always took up my time. Whatever happened abroad made me uneasy. I was obliged to think of means for my own safety, and to force myself to conceal my uneasiness both from myself and others. The day I spent in disagreeable occupations and tedious dissipations, and part of the night in reading state papers, and in writing. Was it possible for me to be happy in such a situation? Now I am more serene and more easy. I occupy myself with religion, which interests me much, and which is my only comfort. I have an hopeful prospect in eternity, and my death does not disquiet me much, and not very often. How I may be affected at a more trying crisis, I do not know, but I am convinced of my being now happy and composed, and that I am not desirous of returning into my former situation."

*The seventeenth Conference. March the 30th.*

"THE more, said the Count, I learn christianity from Scripture, the more I grow convinced, how unjust those objections are which  
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it is charged with. I find, for instance, that all which Voltaire says of the intolerance of the christians, and of bloodshedding caused by christianity, is a very unjust charge laid upon religion. It is easily to be seen, that those cruelties, said to be caused by religion, if properly considered, were the production of human passions, selfishness and ambition, and that religion served in such cases only for a cloak. To be convinced of this, one may read only the history of the cruel transactions of the Spaniards in America."

Having finished reading Newton on Prophecies, he made some remarks upon this argument in favour of the truth of the christian religion, and then concluded: "My affairs of this world are now finished, a few conferences with my defensor, and a few letters, which I intend to write, excepted."

I then told him, that we now could regularly carry on our conferences, and said, Let us now conscientiously employ the rest of our time in promoting the great business of your salvation. He replied:

"This certainly I shall do with all possible earnestness. Thank God! I am fully convinced of the truth of the christian religion, and I feel its power in quieting my conscience and reforming  
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ing my sentiments. I hope God will forgive me those doubts which perhaps might start in my mind, and those slight emotions of my former passions by which I was ruled, and which even now sometimes will disturb me. I find no pleasure in them, and endeavour to suppress them immediately. I am ready to convince you by any fact you may demand of me to show how ready I am to sacrifice my former affections. Never should I have done so before I was enlightened by religion. I do not know whether this is sufficient reason for you to be satisfied with me. Try me in what manner you shall think proper: and if you are satisfied with me, do not mind if others should judge otherwise, according to their opinion, and say you had attempted to bring me over by reasoning. I acknowledge it with gratitude before God, that you took this method. In no other manner you would have prevailed upon me. I should have opposed with obstinacy. Perhaps some impression might have been made upon me, but a solid and lasting conviction never would have been brought about. Besides, God cannot be displeased, since religion is so reasonable, that men are gained over by reason. Christ himself acted so, and Paul accommodated himself at Athens, and before Felix and Agrippa, to the

way of thinking of those he had to deal with. I hope the manner, in which I came to alter my sentiments in regard to religion and virtue, will raise the attention of those that think as I formerly did. The deists will never trust the conversion of their brethren, which is brought about in the latter days of their life. They say, they are taken by surprise through the declamation of the clergyman; they have lost their reason; they are stupid or frantic by the violence of their illness; the fear of death made them ignorant of what they did.—But now since I came to learn christianity, in the manner I did, nobody shall say so. I have examined the christian religion during a good state of health, and with all the reason I am master of. I tried every argument, I felt no fear, I have taken my own time, and I have not been in haste. The chief business which I, for the sake of my own mind's ease, have still to transact is, to search whether I find those signs within me, which are required, if upon a good foundation, I believe myself to be pardoned before God.”

I gave him a letter of his pious mother, which he took with an air of tenderness and tranquillity. “ He said, he should read it, when alone.”—

He added: "I never felt my love to my parents so great, as now. I never was so fully convinced of their good intentions towards me. And my good mother! (here a flood of tears broke forth) She always has loved me with a kind of preference."

The following is the letter.

*Rendburg, March the 17th, 1772:*

"Instead of entertaining you with our mutual grief and pain, I rather find myself under a necessity to acquaint you, with those prevalent feelings of my heart, on account of that condition you are in at present. Many days and years the subject of my prayers to God has been, that he might save your immortal soul from everlasting ruin. I have therefore now sacrificed my desires, which made me, as a mother, wish for the happiness of my children, not only of their souls, but likewise of their body. If the mercy of God cannot otherwise reach the welfare of your soul, but by means that are hard and painful to the outward man, I have submitted with an humble and composed mind, to the most holy and most perfect will of the Lord who had mercy upon us from everlasting. But never

could I expect that doleful situation you are in now. My maternal heart is thereby crushed to pieces, and as it were immured alive. God is my refuge. My sole comfort under so hard sufferings, will be the salvation of your soul. I shall praise the Almighty with tears of joy, when I hear he, as the friend of sinful men, has still thoughts of peace over you, and that he with thorns has shut up the way which could lead you to everlasting ruin. I do not doubt but the Spirit of God has convinced your mind already, that your Redeemer would not have you lost for ever, since you are his property. Give but farther attention to that work of grace which the Holy Spirit is doing within your soul, for the sake of your conviction. He will reveal to you more, than the tongues of men can make you acquainted with. Think you have to do with nobody, but God and yourself, and remove therefore all your thoughts from things of this world. If the Spirit of God shall have only first glorified Christ within you; if you have been brought so far as to apply to yourself his fully sufficient redemption; you then will count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus your Lord: you then will count it but dung, that you may win Christ. Your eternal and immortal mind will enjoy already

ready here more ease, comfort, and joy, than ever the world, with all its splendor and pleasure, can afford us. It has pleased God to convince my soul of this from my youth. There is no happier state in the world than to be a true christian, both in good and evil days. How much would it have pleased me, if all my children had likewise let this blessed conviction be produced within them by the Spirit of God from their youth. But I have found, that this is only a work of God, and not of men. Now, my dear son, what may have been not properly conducted or neglected by men, let us be truly sorry for, and beg God's forgiveness. But do not despair of God's mercy, which he has so clearly revealed in Christ our Redeemer. Let us not lessen God's intentions, but give a faithful assent to those true assertions of Scripture: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." But all these doctrines are such, that mere human reason can neither clear them up sufficiently nor convince us thereof. You must beg for the assistance of the Holy Ghost: for it is he that reveals unto us by his word, Christ and the great work of his redemption, in a salutary manner. If you

will only set about an examination of the chief doctrines of our holy religion, with candid and sincere intentions, and earnest prayer to God for the enlightening of your understanding, you will find breaking forth a light in your soul, which is more than mere natural, and which will serve you for better insight, and greater confirmation of these doctrines. I write this after the small share of knowledge, which the grace of God has granted me. My faith has, notwithstanding all the literal knowledge of the revealed truth, been obliged to work through the most specious objections. But praised be the Lord and his Spirit, who has strengthened my faith by his word, and by my own inward experience of its truth, that even the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, as long as I keep close to the Omnipotent God, and rid not myself of him. And this is my anchor in these my highest sufferings, else the waves of my distresses would soon set adrift the vessel of my faith. I wish and beg to God, that he may grant you this support of your faith. Jesus Christ is, and remains for ever, the true cornerstone, upon which the structure of our salvation is to be begun and to be finished. From your infancy you shewed a character of mind that was sincere and without disguise. Let this natural  
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good disposition of yours be sanctified by the Holy Spirit, that you may turn to your God with all sincerity. For God prospers the honest. Blessed is the man in whose spirit there is no guile. Learn how deeply you are corrupted, and come then as a cursed sinner to him who was made a curse for us. Your father and I will both cry to God and implore his mercy for you. I remain your heartily afflicted mother," &c.

D. Hee came to-day again to see the Count, and to tell him, that Count Brandt greatly rejoiced to hear of his conversion. That he found his only comfort in religion, that he never lost all sense of it, and that he from his heart forgave him all that he had done to draw him into his misfortunes. Count Struensee gave his answer very affectingly, and D. Hee took his leave.

*The eighteenth Conference. March the 31st.*

MY readers will remember that the Count had already adopted the doctrine of Christ's redemption, and was therefore a chri-

ftian. He was now ready to acknowledge the other mysteries of religion, which are connected with this doctrine, to be divine. I thought it nevertheless necessary to shew him how reasonable and useful they were, that by this his belief might be the better grounded, and that no doubts on account of those mysteries might make him uneasy. I made therefore first the following general observations on the subject.

If it has pleased God, said I, to reveal himself to men through Christ, his intention was, either to restore natural religion among men, which was nearly lost, and to lay before men, with the highest authority, those truths, which were dispersed in thousands of human writings; or to reveal them doctrines, which were unknown to mere reason, though very necessary to be known for the happiness of men. Perhaps God had both these intentions.

The first of them was certainly very beneficent towards mankind, and particularly worthy of God. The knowledge of natural religion was only to be met with among the Jews, and perhaps a few heathen philosophers. The end of revelation therefore was to restore this salutary knowledge, and to adapt it to the capacity of  
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all men. But this was not the whole of the intention ; for if Jesus was to teach only natural religion, the preparations, which God made to procure credit for his messenger among men, seem to be too great. The doctrines which Christ preached in this respect, were of such a nature, that mere human reason, as soon as it got acquainted with them, must find them clear and true. Therefore if this had been all, it was unnecessary to confirm the doctrine by means of so many miracles, particularly Christ's resurrection, and the inspiration of his Apostles.

It appears from this, that it was the intention of God, that Christ should reveal unto us doctrines which were unknown to reason, at the same time that he was to teach us natural religion : and since he has done both, it is a proof that both was the intention of his coming. Miracles became now necessary to serve him for credentials of being a messenger of God, and to convince men that those new revealed doctrines which Christ preached, and were above human reason, came from God. You see from this, that a religion, whose author performed miracles, must, according to its intention, contain mysteries.

Besides,

Besides, the incomprehensible doctrines of the christian religion are of such a nature, that they inform us more fully of God and his will, and how a sinful man can be saved. In both respects, it teaches us more than reason does. For instance, reason tells us the unity of God, and revelation adds, that Three Persons are in one Deity. Reason looks out in vain for a sufficient means of reconciliation with God; revelation teaches wherein this means consists. Is it therefore to be wondered at, that this revelation, when it speaks of the infinite and incomprehensible God and his decrees which were unknown to reason, should open unto us such prospects which our eyes cannot fully discern, or which is the same, that it should teach mysteries, and require our faith to believe them? Whoever therefore declines adopting the christian religion, shews himself unacquainted with its intention and its objects. He does not do that justice to religion, which he does to other sciences. For though they contain more mysteries than religion ever did, he nevertheless does not object to them. You yourself, said I, have met with thousands of incomprehensibilities in physick and chemistry, but I suppose you never thought them for this reason altogether dreams and deception. He owned it was true.

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I continued : If God was to reveal unto us mysteries unknown to reason, and which concerned himself and his will, he must do this by signs which we could understand, and these must be words. But in the language of men there were no words which could exactly convey that idea God was to communicate to us ; for we cannot have words in any language to express an idea we know nothing of. God was therefore to make use of such words as conveyed that idea, which he wanted to reveal unto us, as nearly as possible ; but nevertheless these words must always remain imperfect. He cannot apply them in their full signification, and with all the ideas annexed to them, to those mysteries, which God has made known to us. They are to be taken only in their primitive and universal signification, and every thing imperfect is to be separated from them.

I explained this to the Count by some examples, which he thought cleared up the matter very much. I said : There are some ideas annexed to that relation which subsists between father and son. The father must have been before the son ; he must have attained a certain age before he begot the son ; he must have been connected with a person of the other sex. Now if any body was

to apply these ideas to the scripture expression, Christ is the son of God, he would not only mistake the matter, but even find many contradictions. Suppose an inhabitant of Iceland was to explain to an Indian the freezing up of the sea, he would find no word in the language of an Indian to express this phenomenon. Nevertheless he is to speak to the Indian in his own language; he therefore is obliged to make use of improper words and images. He could, for instance, say, In my country the sea, by the influence of the air, changes, at certain seasons, into stone. Now the Indian is right if he thinks, that the sea in Iceland is sometimes as hard and solid as stone; but he is in great danger to represent the matter to himself quite falsely, if he was to apply the rest of the properties of a stone and its use to the ideas of ice: If he should think that houses were built of ice, and served like some stones for fuel to cook victuals with.

I now desired the Count to keep these general observations concerning the mysteries of religion always before his eyes, since I was about proposing them to him singly, to explain their scriptural sense, to shew that they did not contradict reason, and that they were beneficial to mankind.

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The first mystery connected with the doctrine of redemption is this : Christ is the son of God. The chief passages of Scripture in which this doctrine is told, are, Matth. iii. 17. Mark ix. 7. John iii. 16. This last passage, where Christ emphatically is called the only begotten son, shews that he is the son of God in a far more eminent sense than men, and particularly the pious, who are called children of God.

Now if God calls Christ his son, what shall we think by this? Christ has his essence of God, like as a son of his father, yet not in the manner that this expression conveys to us, which carries imperfections with it, but in an eminent manner which we cannot explain. Christ has the same essence which the father has, and is therefore perfectly equal with him, Hebr. i. 3. Christ the first born and only begotten son of God is entitled to every perfection of the father, he is united with him in perfect love, as an only son is with his father. You see from this that the father has represented to us that relation which subsists between him and Christ under the image of a father and a son, because in the whole human nature no picture is to be found which expresses the most intimate union more exactly and more perfectly than this.—Do you find now in this representation any thing contradicting?

“ No,

“No, said the Count, here is no contradiction; the whole mystery lies in the inexplicable manner, by which Christ has his essence from God the father.”

I added: Reason, therefore, cannot pretend to object any thing to this proposition; Christ is the son of God; it rather is under an obligation to believe it without contradiction, out of reverence for the testimony and authority of him who has revealed it unto us.

I now made the remark, that all the mysteries of the christian religion are beneficial to mankind, and that it was to our own real advantage to believe them. In this respect it is very beneficial to us that Christ is the son of God. Hence the son of God is our friend, our benefactor, our Saviour, our intercessor. Is there any thing good which he has promised us, that he should not have it in his power to give it? Every thing good, both in heaven and upon earth, is his as well as his father's. God will certainly hear his only begotten son when he intercedes for us. Are we to doubt that he that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, shall not with him also freely give us all things?

Dear friend, this son of God is your Redeemer. You acknowledge him to be such. Judge now what grace and mercy you may expect of him, if you firmly and confidently trust in his redemption; if you spare no pains to think and act, during the remainder of your life, like him, God, I trust, will not punish you in eternity, but be reconciled unto you through his own son. He will not deny you life everlasting when Christ powerfully intercedes for you. Praised be God, who has enabled you to entertain such a glorious hope, as no power, no splendour, no lust of this world, and not your own reason itself could procure you. May he preserve you in this hope until your death, for Christ's sake !

The Count was very much moved, and promised to read what I had written on the subject of to-day, and which I left him for his further perusal. He had likewise those sheets before him which I had given him upon former subjects to read them over again, to see how all these doctrines stood connected. He said :

“ He remembered that we had agreed once, that mere reason could not have found out the doctrine of redemption ; but he found that many heathen nations had attempted to reconcile the Deity, by means of sacrifices.”

I answered :

I answered : Conscience teaches man to reconcile God for sins committed ; but that sacrifices were thought to serve for this purpose, was perhaps founded in the Jewish dispensation. Even mere reason might have invented sacrifices, because they were a proof that we rather would part with our property than entertain the thought of being under God's displeasure. But that God would give his own son for a sacrifice, was the manner of reconciliation which we agreed that reason itself could never have found out. After this the Count said :

“ One of my former objections comes into my mind again, which is : Why God could chuse so despicable a people as the Jews were, for his peculiar one ? ”

When I had answered, that it might be, because they were descendants of Abraham the friend of God, of whom they had received the true natural religion, and that they formerly were not so despicable as they now are thought to be, he added :

“ It is true, we cannot prove from their being so despicable at present, that they have been always so. Besides, the despicableness of a nation,



tion, is entirely a relative notion. An Englishman despises a Frenchman, and a Frenchman thinks his nation the most respectable one under the sun."

*The nineteenth Conference. April the 1st.*

THE Count being told that since he believed the doctrine of redemption, he could not but believe the other mysteries, because they were founded upon the same authority; he answered:

"I shall make no difficulties about that; if the one be true, the other must be so likewise. You have hitherto satisfied my reason, and I do not doubt but you will be able to do it further."

I continued: If Christ is the only begotten Son of God, and has of God his divine Essence, he must be the true God. The New Testament and Christ himself teaches this. It appears likewise from John v. 18. that the Jews understood him very well, for they sought the more to kill him, not only because he had broken the Sabbath, but said, that God was his father, making himself equal with God. Christ con-

firmed what he had said, by what follows, particularly ver. 21, 22, 23. Let us mind the following three reasons: " The Son quickeneth whom he will; all judgment is committed unto the Son; all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."

St. Paul treats likewise, Heb. i. of the divinity of Christ. He calls him the " Son of God, by whom the worlds are made; The brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person." He applies an expression of Psal. xlv. 7. where God is addressed, to Christ, and calls him absolutely God.

When I had read and explained to the Count, the two passages of John v. and Heb. i. he said: " It is undeniable, that it was the intention of Jesus and of Paul to tell the Jews that the Son is God."

Having more fully proposed and proved this doctrine of Christ's Divinity, the Count, at the conclusion of the whole, said:

" I cannot describe to you, how much my reason is satisfied on account of these mysteries of religion. The more we think upon them,  
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the more of divine wisdom we discover in them. We must only avoid asking every where: Why?—We must rest satisfied with the authority of their author. Even in human sciences this modesty is requisite: else we never should come to any certainty. Most common things may employ our researches for all our life time, before we discover the first cause. Every *why?* would draw innumerable questions of the same nature after it, though our reason is not calculated to go *in infinitum*."

The Count had now finished the history of Christ's sufferings, and had found the miracles that happened at the death of Christ very remarkable. He asked:

"If any other historians, besides the Evangelists, made any mention of them?"

He was told that Phlegon, Tertullian and Lucian, made mention of this famous eclipse. Upon this the Count said:

"He had spoken yesterday with somebody, who would not allow these events to be real miracles, because they could be fully accounted for by mere natural causes; but that he had told him, it was nevertheless remarkable,

that these events should have happened at the time when Christ died, and even at the hour of his death. It seemed as if God, even by this very circumstance, would raise people's attention to the death of Jesus."

I told him, he might have added, that this eclipse happened on the day before Easter, when, at the time of the full moon, this event could not take place in the natural way.

The father of the Count had desired me in a letter, which I had lately received, to assure his son of the continuation of his love and intercession before God. I communicated to him the letter. He would fain have answered something, but his grief of heart prevented it. When I left him half an hour after: "He begged me with tears in his eyes, to write to his parents, and to tell them that he certainly hoped to afford them the only comfort they wished for, which was, to find them again before the throne of God, amongst those that have received mercy."

*The twentieth Conference. April the 3d.*

THE chief subject of this Conference was the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is taught in the christian church. This doctrine being stated to him in the most simple manner, he said :

“ It appeared to him so as to excite his veneration. But as he was now a convinced christian, as to the theoretical parts of Christ’s religion, he wished only to be the same, as to the practical parts of it.”

I gave him joy of having now adopted the religion of Jesus with all his heart. If you now lose your life, you will find infinite compensation in eternity.—He answered :

“ Certainly I shall lose nothing. The loss would have been irreparable, if I had remained in my former situation. For in all probability I should never have become a christian. But I know now for certain, that if it was possible for me to live any longer in this world, I should never quit religion again. I have been

oftentimes obstinate in my opinions, and here I should be so for good reasons."

He being told in what manner he might shew and convince himself of being a practical christian ; he said :

"I am ready to do any thing demanded in this respect. It gives me pleasure to find myself willing for this. I look upon it as a good sign. Formerly I should not have been so. I would not have sacrificed my vicious inclinations. I shall consider in what manner I may give you and myself convincing proofs of the sincerity of my present sentiments. You frequently have dropt a hint, as if you thought I had still too great an opinion of my administration of public affairs. I have taken my own time to go into the detail of it ; I have searched the very springs, and I will not conceal before you the result of my enquiries. Believe me then, that I had no intention of doing mischief. Voluptuousness and vanity were the springs of all that I did. The great opinion I had of my abilities, and which was supported by others, made me resolve, at my first coming into Denmark, to act a great part. I cannot say I ever imagined it would be such as I have since acted. But  
you

you know, opportunities and circumstances lead us sometimes farther than we thought of in the beginning. One step follows the other. Even from this you may conclude, that I absolutely must find the whole chain of my enterprizes reproachful before God and my own conscience. —But at the same time, I am conscious, that I was no enemy to what the great world called virtue and honesty. I do not tell you this in my own praise. I know this is not owing to my endeavours, but rather a consequence of my natural way of thinking, and every man has a certain general love of virtue. That I missed my intention, was my own fault. I was looking out for what is good, but I did not find it, for I took not reason and religion, but passion for my guide.”

He had now finished Spalding's book on the value of the inward feelings of christianity. He returned me thanks for having it given to him, and added :

“ My ideas of that reformation in man, which is to be brought about by conversion, are greatly rectified by this book. I own with joy, I find christianity more amiable the more I get acquainted with it. I never knew it before.

I believed it contradicted reason and the nature of man, whose religion it was designed to be. I thought it an artfully contrived and ambiguous doctrine, full of incomprehensibilities. Whenever I formerly thought on religion in some serious moments, I had always an idea in my mind how it ought to be, which was, it should be simple and accommodated to the abilities of men in every condition. I now find christianity to be exactly so; it answers entirely that idea which I had formed of true religion. Had I but formerly known it was such, I should not have delayed turning christian till this time of my imprisonment. But I had the misfortune to be prejudiced against religion, first through my own passions, but afterwards likewise through so many human inventions, foisted into it, of which I could see plainly that they had no foundation, though they were stiled essential parts of christianity. I was offended when God was always represented to me as an angry jealous Judge, who is much pleased when he has an opportunity of shewing his revenge, though I knew he was love itself; and am now convinced, that though he must punish, yet he takes no kind of delight in it, and is rather for pardoning. From my infancy, I have known but few christians that had not scandalized



lized me by their enthusiasm, and wickedness, which they wanted to hide under the cloak of piety. I knew indeed that not all christians were such, or talked such an affected language; but I was too volatile to enquire of better christians after the true spirit of religion. Frequently I heard sermons in my youth, but they made no impression upon me. That without Christ there was no salvation, was the only truth which served for a subject in all sermons, and this was repeated over and over again in synonymous expressions. But it was never set in its true light, and never properly proved. I saw people cry at church, but after their tears were dried up, I found them in their actions not in the least better, but rather allowing themselves in every transgression, upon the privilege of being faithful believers. Lastly, I could not comprehend those inward feelings which many christians pretend to have. It appeared to me unnatural and miraculous. Nevertheless, it has made me uneasy during our acquaintance, that I have found nothing of these inward feelings: and I believe you have observed my uneasiness. I found my real sorrow for my sins not adequate to those expressions, which I had heard frequently in my youth, and which had terrified me so much. I endeavoured

ed to heighten my grief to such a degree: but I saw on the other side, that this forcing myself, by means of imagination, was not that grief I sought for, or what might have pleased God. Spalding's book has satisfied me on this account. I am now sure that the chief point is a confidence in God through Christ, and a true reformation of mind from what is bad to what is good. I myself can find out and be sensible, whether I have this confidence, and I myself am able to judge, whether such a reformation has taken place within my mind.

*The twenty-first Conference. April the 4th.*

**I** Repeated to the Count all we had done together hitherto, and surveyed with him afresh the whole way that brought him to where he now was. After which he said:

“ That his present ease of mind was quite a different thing, from what he believed he had formerly. Now he found himself really composed, whereas he formerly only forced himself to appear

to be so. Perhaps he might have been able to die with an outside appearance of firmness, but he believed he should have found himself quite different, from what he hoped to find now in the hour of death."

The formal impeachment of the Count was to come on in a few days, and he was summoned to appear in person to hear it, and to produce what he might have to say in his defence.

This he told me, and asked my advice, whether he should let his affairs have their own way, or, whether he should make the best defence he could?

I told him, christianity never forbad him to use all lawful means to save himself.

" Among the crimes," said he, " that will be laid to my charge, there is one incapable of any apology or mitigation. I see therefore that the probability of saving my life is by far inferior to that of suffering death. And besides, I see nothing pleasing before me, even if I should save my life. Imprisonment for life would be unsupportable to me. However, I cannot deny that

that I shiver when I think on the hour of death under such circumstances ! Consider, if you please, what you would advise me to."

I do not see any hopes for you, said I. Government has ordered you a council. He knows the laws better than I do, and therefore can tell you best what you have to hope, and what not. Your judges are conscientious men, and well versed in the law.

" I am convinced of that, said he ; they treated me like honest people."

Being advised not to flatter himself with vain hopes of saving his life, he gave me his hand, and promised that he would guard against it.

" I believe, said he, God will not be displeased, that I feel the instinct of preserving my life, which he himself has implanted. I hope, at the same time, that if I am to die, even then I shall be supported by a prospect (at least) of not being worse off in eternity than I am now.—And do you think I should do wrong, if I, at my approaching painful and ignominious death, call to my assistance all the natural and even acquired fortitude which I am possessed of?"

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I told him it would not be wrong if he did, but without any views of vanity. I hoped, however, religion would afford a much better and a much surer comfort, and prove a support adequate to his sufferings.

He read at present the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians ; and said, he observed in St. Paul a great genius, much wisdom, and true philosophy. He was particularly pleased with his decision of the disputed question : Whether it was right to eat what was sacrificed to the idols ? He said, it did honour to his prudence.

I now gave him Spalding's sermons to read, which he took with great readiness, being very partial to the author.

*The twenty-second Conference. April the 6th.*

TO shew the Count how far his reformation and his intentions of doing good were sincere, and how far his hopes of having received God's mercy were well grounded, I laid the following questions for self-examination before him, and took his answers down in writing, that I might consider them by myself when alone, and tell him afterwards my opinion how far I found them agreeing with the sense of the Gospel.

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The following are the principal questions and his answers.

Are you heartily sorry that you have offended God by those voluptuous thoughts and actions of which you find yourself guilty ?

“ I look upon it as one of my greatest crimes, and know that it has led me further and further from that truth which I might have found in the knowledge of religion, and I consider it as the principal source of all my crimes and vices.”

Do you think on these transgressions with detestation, which gave you, according to your former sentiments, the greatest pleasure ?

“ I think not only with indifference on all those sensual pleasures, but even I hate them, since I find how opposite and detrimental they are to real happiness.”

Do you believe, that if you had for the future any more opportunities to commit these sins, you would avoid them out of obedience to God ?

“ I am sure I should not be able to avoid them for any other reason. Therefore, since I begin to taste the happiness of virtue, and am sure that I cannot acquire it but by a true fear of  
God

God and the desire of acting according to his will, I am determined never to lose sight of this. I shall endeavour to rectify all my principles and actions by the efficacious assistance of these means, which I am become acquainted with through the knowledge of God and his revelation.”

Are you truly sorry because you have offended God by leading on to immorality, and by making unhappy, through your inclination for sensual pleasures, not only certain particular persons, but other people likewise?

“ I am extremely sorry that I have rendered unhappy some persons by my principles, inconsiderateness, and inclination for sensual pleasures, not only by hindering their temporal welfare, but likewise by corrupting their moral character. At the same time I repent very much that I have set so bad an example, and thereby spoiled the good morals of others. I reproach myself on account of those persons whom I have actually seduced.”

Do you detest those transgressions to which your ambition has instigated you? the false principles upon which you founded your ambition, and the unlawful means you have used to satisfy it?

“ The

“ The first moral principles, according to which I acted, were against God’s precepts, and were founded upon a system of honour which I myself had formed, and where the principal view was always to gratify my own desires and self-interests. According to my present conviction, I cannot but think the whole chain of my actions in regard to honour reproachful, even then when I might justify or excuse them before the world.”

Are you sorry that the happiness of so many people, besides that of your friends, who suffer with you now, has been made, a sacrifice to your ambition, during the time of your exalted station ?

“ I own I cannot excuse before God my having thought too slightly of other people’s happiness. I abused the maxim that a single member of society might suffer for the benefit of the whole. God has recommended to us the love of our neighbour as the chief of virtues, which requires that every one shall promote the temporal welfare of single persons as much as lies in his power, at least shall he not destroy it. All my political reasons, which then determined me to act so, will not excuse me or quiet my conscience. And as for the misfortunes of my friends, I feel  
them



them so much the more, since my natural tenderness on this point disposes me already for it."

Do you repent of that presumption with which you placed yourself at the helm of administration, gave laws, and trifled with the happiness of the nation ?

" I find myself guilty of this in my conscience. If even I could derive some excuses from the circumstances I was in, and which drew me in further than I thought in the beginning ; I am nevertheless always to be blamed, for not making a stronger opposition, and not taking my motives for doing it from religion, where I might have found them."

Are you fully determined to profess christianity until your end, and will you ever act according to its precepts ?

" I now glory as much in christianity and in acknowledging my former errors, as I then did in treating it with contempt. My resolution, which is founded upon conviction, gives me the surest hope that I, in all circumstances, shall keep to it, and observe its precepts until my end."

Are you conscious that you bear no hatred against those whom you think your enemies, nor

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against those who have promoted your present misfortunes ?

“ Since my temper is not revengeful, I am less inclined to hatred, and I trust that those persons who are the cause of my misfortunes, have been acting from conviction, and with an intent to promote the interest of the king and the kingdom. And if even some people should have acted from personal enmity, I forgive it very readily.”

Are you conscious that you spoke the truth before your judges, and in your conversation with me ? Do you likewise propose to speak truth in what you shall say to your counsel, in your defence ?

“ I do not remember to have spoken before my judges one untruth wilfully, unless, perhaps, for want of memory, some mistake has happened. Still less do I know of any thing untrue which I might have spoken to you. I intend likewise not to say any thing in my defence, that should not agree with truth.”

Do you find a true desire to be pardoned by God, through the merits of Christ, and do you trust in God that he will not refuse it ?

“ I have

“ I have no other hopes but what are founded in God’s pardon, and I am convinced, that there are no other means for me to obtain it but the merits of Christ. I strive to qualify myself for this through sincere faith in my Redeemer, and by making my thoughts and sentiments conformable to his will. I pray to God to strengthen me in this respect, since I find within myself nothing but incapacity and weakness.”

Do you look upon this pardon of God as the greatest favour that can be conferred upon you ; greater than even the saving of your temporal life ?

“ The saving of my life and all other temporal emoluments appear to me but very small in comparison of everlasting happiness, which my inward feeling has made me experience already.”

Do you acknowledge yourself obliged, on account of this pardon, to love God and your Redeemer sincerely, and will you strive to increase this love ?

“ The more I grow convinced, the more impression the mercy of God and of my Redeemer makes upon me, and increases my love and gratitude towards him.”

Are you determined to shew this love towards God, by a ready obedience to his will, as long as you shall have time for it ?

“ Since I hope to be more and more convinced of the love of God towards me, and since I acknowledge that what he has decreed relating to me, is in all respects, particularly in regard to my soul, the most advantageous, I am sure that I shall submit to all his will, without murmuring and without reluctance.”

Suppose your death should within a few days, by the interposition of God’s government, become unavoidable, would you suffer it humbly and confiding in God, terrifying as the circumstances may be which shall attend it ?

“ As much as lies in my power, supported by that confidence which I place in God, I shall die with a christianlike resolution.

Are you resolved to derive all your comfort only from religion, and not to call in for assistance a secret ambition, or an affected fortitude ?

“ I have resigned every thing which may be called ambition, and have been obliged to do it ; I am therefore sure that in the last moments of my life I shall not be disturbed by this passion.

I rather

I rather shall derive all my comforts from religion. Even my former ambition would not have led me to affectation. Without religion I should have died as to my outward appearance just as I felt myself inwardly. Properly speaking, I have been obstinate only in defending my opinions, and in this respect I might, perhaps, too often have been guilty of affectation."

The Count assured me, on the close of this examination, that he in all respects had told me exactly the sentiments of his heart.—When I was going to leave him, he begged I would stay a little longer, since he had something to communicate to me.

"I have been considering, said he, about what I asked your advice the other day. I see plainly my life cannot be saved; I am likewise easy about it, and I hope the wish to live longer will disturb me no more, though I do not know how I shall be affected when I am very near death. If the awful moment was but once past, I then shall have lost nothing. If, when I am going to suffer death, I am but capable of thinking, I am sure to find composure and comfort in religion."

And if you should not be able to remember, said I, I shall put you in mind of it, though I do not know how much I myself shall be affected.

“ I wish only you may not be too much affected, said he, for this would add to my sufferings.”

I shall do as much as I can to moderate my tender feelings, and I believe to be able to do this, if I can have hopes that you die a christian.

“ I have been, said he, very uneasy about another thing. You know my chief crime. You know that by confessing it, other persons to whom I lie under great obligations, are rendered likewise unhappy. I have been thinking whether it had not been my duty, on their account, not to have confessed, since gratitude and friendship seemed to demand it. I have been very uneasy about it. But I took to prayers, as now my constant practice is, when I am under anxiety, and considered this whole matter on all sides, directing my heart perpetually towards God. I found that my denying would hinder truth from appearing, and from making its way as it ought. I saw that it would be still worse to cover one crime with another, which would fill me with anxiety of conscience, and make me incapable of receiving God’s pardon. And certainly the request would be unjust, that for the sake of saving others I should sacrifice my everlasting salvation. I found, lastly, that

that if I had denied every thing hitherto, I now should have discovered it to you, and desired you to acquaint my judges with it. By reasoning in this manner, I have been so fortunate as to quiet my mind. I do not care now if people, who have no notion what it is to be anxious about everlasting salvation, should think me to be both a faithless man and a traitor. My confession must be approved of by all true and rational christians. However, the misfortune that has befallen my friends on account of my confession, grieves me more than I am able to express: I can pay them no other damages, but by praying to God to give them the comfort of religion and virtue. This is what I continually am praying for; and if these prayers are granted, I am sure their loss is sufficiently repaid."

*The twenty-third Conference. April the 7th.*

THE Count being told that his answers to the questions proposed to him yesterday were such as proved, that he hitherto had fulfilled those conditions, under which God had promised to grant his pardon, he said:

"I thank God that my peace of mind is likewise a proof of my being not rejected by God. I cannot but persuade myself, that although now

in my fetters, and near a disgraceful death, I am by far more happy than I was in my former grandeur."

When I had convinced him from Scripture passages, that my judgment was well grounded, and had comforted him by telling him, that the more he got acquainted with the advantages of his conversion, the more his faith would increase, and supply him with infinite comfort against death, he said :

" Yes, I hope to experience that my death is but one difficult step, and every thing I lose by it shall infinitely be repaid to me."

Some exhortation being given, he said :  
 " That every night he examined himself whether he had done or thought any thing that might displease God ; if so, he prayed for forgiveness for Christ's sake, and repeated all his good purposes, together with their motives. I believe likewise, said he, that I can pray now with more chearfulness. Hitherto I found myself always unworthy, but I have ventured to pray, trusting to God's mercy."

Being advised to thank God for all the grace he had shewn him during the time of his conversion, he answered :

" I remember



“ I remember with gratitude those powerful impressions made upon me by perusing many of the passages in those books I have been reading; in particular when I was reading the Life of Christ. I own my inclination to look out for truth and to embrace it, has increased thereby from time to time.”

Just when I was leaving the Count, he said; “ I am come now to a resolution how I shall act in regard to my defence. I see neither my life can be saved, nor my actions be justified, nevertheless, I hope to be able to shew, that some are not quite so bad as they appear to be; for you know, to consider our actions in a moral light before God, and in a political one before the world, are two different things. I know how bad mine appear in the former; but it does not follow that a thing should be equally as bad when considered in a political light, as it may be in a moral one. I shall rest satisfied to shew (for more I cannot do) that my political mistakes were the consequences of error, precipitation and passion, but not of a design to do mischief. I think I owe this to truth, and even religion itself, as far as my conversion may either promote or hinder its interest. If, by keeping silence, I had allowed that I had bad intentions (though I do not recollect any myself),

myself), it perhaps then could easily have happened, that my conversion would have been looked upon as weakness and confusion of mind, notwithstanding it is the produce of a serious and rational disquisition. The world might else have said, that a man could easily sacrifice his former principles of religion, when it was a matter of indifference to him, whether he was thought to be a professed rogue, or only a man who had transgressed from error in judgment."

*The twenty-fourth Conference. April the 9th.*

AFTER reciting the happy consequences of his conversion, I asked the Count if any one of those days of his former grandeur and temporal prosperity had ever procured him that true tranquillity of mind which he now enjoyed in his prison and in his fetters ?

" You are in the right, answered the Count ; and if nothing else had made me unhappy, the insatiableness of my passions would have done it, for the most frequent enjoyments could not satisfy them."

He spoke likewise very sensibly about his approaching death. " He declared that death itself (the terrifying circumstances which his might

be attended with excepted) presented nothing dreadful to him, since he knew where it was to conduct him." He declared:

" It should not make him uneasy, if there was even any truth in the opinion of those who asserted, that the soul, when separated from the body, should be in a state of obscure ideas and sensations, or in a kind of sleep. For if my soul was not conscious of itself, or was only in a place of security and ease, I should lose nothing by it. Should this sleep last even a thousand or ten thousand years, it would not make me unhappy, for during all this time, I should not know of any thing. However, it is by far more agreeable to me to learn from Scripture, that my soul, instantly after parting from the body, shall enter, conscious of itself, into possession of its happiness."

Towards the close of this conversation, he said: " Though Scripture tells us but little about the state the soul shall be in during its separation from the body, yet even this little is matter of great comfort. If God had found it useful and necessary to give us further information, he would have done it. It is fully sufficient to quiet my soul, when I know it will be in the hand of God.—From this you may judge  
how

how much it must vex me, if now and then this thought returns : ‘ perhaps there is no eternity ! ’ I examined myself to-day very strictly, if perhaps I found a secret pleasure therein, or if I entertained an obscure notion of its being true : but I profess I found neither of them. There is not a shadow of probability left of my former system, and the strong proofs of the contrary are always before my eyes. Besides, I am so much interested in my being at present better informed, that I would not part with my conviction upon any account, or act wilfully contrary to it. If by committing any crime, even such as the world did not acknowledge to be such, I could gain the greatest temporal advantage, I am confident I should not commit it. If I was promised for certain, my life should be spared, and that I should be restored to my former situation, under condition that I contradicted the confession I have made of my crimes, and that I confirmed with an oath my new assertion, I am sure I should rather die than contradict truth, and take such an oath. I am convinced I never should think thus, where I was not persuaded of eternity, and rather wished or thought it to be a vain fancy. But I see now how difficult it is to extirpate such false ideas, as we were formerly fond of.”

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The Count had read Spalding's sermons, and assured me he was much edified by them. Some of those books which had contributed much to enlighten and reform him, he sent to Count Brandt, for whom he shewed the tenderest care. I gave him this day Doddridge's *treatise on the rise and progress of religion in the soul*.

He desired me to write to his parents, and to comfort them by the account I could now give them of him.

*The twenty-fifth Conference. April the 11th.*

A Conversation which the Count had with a person who disliked the reading of the Bible, on account of its stile, gave occasion to some remarks on the stile of the Bible. Among the rest he observed, that the ralleries of the freethinkers about Christ and his doctrine, were plain proofs, that they had no intention of acting honestly. "It is in general impertinent, said he, to turn a virtuous man into ridicule. The old and unusual expressions of the Bible cannot be the true reason, for which they should think them deserving ridicule. They do not laugh at other ancient writings, which are written in such a stile. If they, for instance, were to read the books of Confucius, I am sure they

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would

would not hesitate about his stile, but praise his morals. In the same manner, they extoll the fables of Æsop, but the parables and narrations of Christ will not please them : notwithstanding they are derived from a greater knowledge of nature, and contain more excellent morality. Besides, they are proposed with a more noble and artless simplicity, than any writings of this kind, among ancient or modern authors. There must be therefore something else which prejudices them against Christ ; and I do not know what else it could be, but their heart, which makes them averse to his precepts.”

Some days since, the Count had obtained leave to have pen and ink ; and he said, “ he would make use of it, to draw up the account of his conversion, which he had promised to leave behind him.”

It will be, said I, a very acceptable legacy to me. Write with reflection, and I hope it will not be useless. It shall remain an authentic monument of your religion and piety. I therefore leave it entirely to you, to arrange your thoughts and to write them down. I will have no other share in it, than to tell  
you

you in general terms, how it is to be drawn up so as to answer its intention. This intention is partly to efface those impressions your example has made upon the minds of others; partly to raise the attention of those that are of the same way of thinking as you formerly were. It must therefore appear by this writing, that your sentiments about religion and virtue are really altered. At the same time, you are to relate how this alteration was produced. I think this to be necessary, lest any body should doubt its truth. As to your stile and expressions, it must be such, as will not be displeasing to the people of the world, and that others may not entertain any doubt of your having become a christian.

“ I shall endeavour,” said he, “ to keep these rules before my eyes. But if you find any mistake, that I perhaps was not sufficiently acquainted with some doctrines, or that some passages may be liable to censure, you are always at liberty to correct them.”

No, replied I, not a single word shall I attempt to alter. It must be entirely your own, for fear some people should think it spurious.

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The Count remembered the late Reverend Mr. Alberti of Hamburgh, with whom he was personally acquainted, and wished to read his sermons, which I sent him.

*The twenty-sixth Conference. April the 13th.*

“ **A**Lberti’s sermons,” said the Count, “ have much edified me. They have likewise contributed to make me have a greater regard for religion, and at the same time made me more composed and happy.”

The to-day’s conversation turned upon the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. The Count having been made acquainted with the arguments in favour of it, said :

“ He believed the chief objections against the resurrection of the body, were started after it had been positively asserted by Christ. From that time, those who had a bad conscience, became fearful. They endeavoured to secure themselves by such objections, against anxious expectations.” He added, after some other reflexions, “ That death was not indifferent to him,



him, but yet not terrible. Nevertheless, he could not deny, but that he had great reason to repent of those actions by which he had hastened it; yet, since this could not be altered, and he was sure that his sins would be forgiven, he had nothing that could attach him to this life, except the natural instinct of self-preservation; and he was ready to leave this world as soon as God pleased to call him. He did not care what might become of his body after his decease, for it was safe every where under God's care. In the mean time, he would make the best use of his time he could, and endeavour to become every day better and more acceptable to God. For this purpose, said he, I read, I pray, I reflect on my former and my present situation, and compare them both; I speak to the officers about religion and virtue, but without intruding and without affectation."

*The twenty-seventh Conference. April the 14th.*

**F**UTURE judgment, and everlasting rewards and punishments, were the subject of this Conference. With regard to eternity and future punishments, the Count expressed himself in this manner:

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“ If even the punishments of a future world, were only to last during the life of a man, it would be very terrifying, and sufficient to keep us from sin. It would be dreadful enough if the punishments consisted in nothing else but the natural consequences of sin, without any further dispensations of God. I thought men might be punished in eternity by those passions to which they were addicted in this world. They leave this world with all their internal appetites, which attend them in all their strength. There is nothing in the other world to satisfy these desires. They consume themselves in insatiable longings, and vain wishes. God need only say to them : You shall remain as you are.”

Being told that since his salutary reformation, he joyfully might expect his sentence before God's tribunal, he replied, “ That he really waited with joy for it, and trusted in God's mercy.” He said, “ His objections, which he formerly thought unanswerable, were now quite gone, or at least of so little consequence, that he doubted about the truth of religion no more than about my being with him. He was now so conscientious, that he examined every thing

thing he did and thought, whether it agreed with the will of God. And he found himself by this so well, so composed, so happy, that he was sure, he should constantly think and act in the same manner."

As the time of his death drew near, I thought proper to inspire him with ideas of futurity; for which purpose I gave him Lavater's Prospects into eternity.

*The twenty-eighth Conference. April the 17th.*

TO day our conversation turned partly upon eternity. On occasion of the explanation of several passages of Scripture, that have a relation to this subject, the Count admired the propriety of St. Paul's expressions, and the images he made use of.

" I find now," said he, " that I from time to time get more acquainted with the stile of the Apostles. They write extremely well, now and then inimitably beautiful, and at the same time with simplicity and clearness." He quoted several passages, particularly from the eighth chapter to the Romans. He added, " I should

like to see other publicans and tent-makers, write in the same manner as the Evangelists and Apostles did."

Being reminded that his uncommon and unexpected calmness and composure of mind, was a consequence of his being certain of God's pardon, he said:

" It is certainly a consequence of my being pardoned for Christ's sake, and of my being conscious that my sentiments are altered; and this accounts for those ill founded ideas of the feelings in christianity. The composed mind which christianity procures, is such a feeling. I have it now myself. They were only mistaken in explaining the reasons thereof. Why should God produce these sensations by miracles, when they are the natural off-spring of a well founded conviction, and a true conversion?"

Towards the end of the conversation, he declared, " That he thought himself very happy in being so near eternity, though the manner in which he entered into it must be melancholy for him. In the mean time, he would do every thing in his power, to be in a situation in which he might hope to overcome the terrors of death,  
and

and to be certain of an happy immortality. He believed, his duty in this point consisted chiefly in having his former life continually before his eyes, that he might keep up a lively sense of repentance, and in striving to confirm himself in his present sentiments, to mind them, and to accustom himself more and more to them. This, said he, is now my whole occupation; it is so interesting to me, and pleases me so well, that nothing is more agreeable to my taste. A little while ago I used, as I told you, to read sometimes *L'histoire generale des voyages*. I then thought that I could employ my time better. But not being willing to appear in my own eyes in a hypocritical light, I would not forcibly suppress my inclination for this book. This inclination has now left me. I do not like to read, or to meditate on any thing else, but what concerns my chief business, which is a preparation for eternity. Thank God, I am advanced now so far, that my doubts do not make me any more uneasy. What you told me in the beginning, I find to be true, for no objection presents itself but what I am able to answer to my satisfaction."

“ The christian religion,” said he on another occasion, “ is so engaging, that it certainly must please every one who is properly acquainted with it. We should see the best effects of it among the common people, in reforming the world, if it was properly represented, and made intelligible to the capacity of different sorts of people. They should be made sensible, that in this life they could never be happier than by following the precepts of christianity. Every one then would be convinced, that, supposing even this religion to be a delusion, it must be such an one as contradicts entirely the nature of error and delusion, because it is the best and truest way to happiness. Every one would think it worth his while to maintain this error and to propagate it.”—He continued, “ I wish you and other divines would write small pamphlets, to acquaint the people with the advantages of christianity, which might be of greater service than preaching.—In this manner Voltaire has written, as you know, innumerable little pieces against religion, which contain always the same over again under different titles, and in a different dress. Rational friends of christianity should learn of him this method, by which he does much mischief, and apply it to better purposes. Voltaire  
boasts

boasts of having found out this method, as he says, to enlighten the world. I remember that when I conversed with D'Alembert at Paris, in my travels, that he spoke much in praise of this method, and admired Voltaire's wisdom in this point. However, I do not believe him to be the inventor of it. Perhaps he has borrowed this way of spreading his principles from Christ himself, who taught truth; sometimes in parables, sometimes in questions and answers, sometimes in sermons."

" D'Alembert told me at the same time, that he had carefully examined christianity, and had found nothing against reason in it. But the reason why he did not adopt it was, because he had no inward feelings of it. These feelings were the gift of God, and since he denied them him, he hoped to be excused for not having it, and consequently for not being a christian."

Lastly, the Count complained of having been for some time troubled with disagreeable dreams. He wanted to know how far there was any morality in them, and how far they could be charged to men. Being told that they proceeded from the free exertion of the soul during the time we are awake, he said : " This answer satisfies me, for I never think of those things, to which the

dreams are related. In general, I observe, that they derive their origin not from sensations and ideas, which were but lately in my mind, but from such as were at a greater distance of time. Thus, during the first week of my imprisonment, I dreamt of nothing but of my parents, whom I have not seen a long while. It was as if I were in their house and their company. Many things that happened in their presence during my infancy, came into my mind again."

*The twenty-ninth Conference. April the 20th.*

**A**MONG other things, which were the subject of this conversation, it was mentioned, that the nearer and more perfect contemplation of the works of God in futurity, would be a source of pure and everlasting joy to the blessed. The Count then mentioned, " That the contemplation of the works of nature had oftentimes afforded him great satisfaction, and that it had been the only means of keeping him from atheism, into which he otherwise certainly should have fallen."

An exhortation of advancing in godliness, since his end was so near, produced the following declaration



declaration from him : “ Thank God,” said he, “ I am ready to die, if it should be even to-morrow. The freethinkers will say, I should have found within myself strength enough against my misfortunes, without applying to religion. They will say, I shewed myself now a coward, and was for this reason unworthy of my former prosperity. I wish to God I had not been unworthy of it for other reasons. However, I should like to ask these gentlemen, in what manner I should have found comfort within myself ? I durst not think on my crimes, on my present situation, on futurity, if I wanted tranquillity of mind. Nothing was left for me but to endeavour to stupify myself and to dissipate my thoughts. But how long would this have lasted in my present solitude, and being removed from all opportunities of dissipation ? And suppose it had been possible, it would have been of little use, for the cause of fear and anxiety remained always, and would have roused me frequently from my artificial insensibility. I tried this method during the first weeks of my confinement, before I reflected on my condition. I laid for three or more hours together on my bed. My fancy composed romances, I travelled through the whole world, and my imaginations produced a thousand pictures to amuse myself with.

with. But at that time I fancied to see many ways of saving my life. I did not know whether and how far, my crimes might be discovered. A certain circumstance, which deprived me of all my hopes, was then still unknown to me. And even then, dissipation would not answer the purpose. If I could dream in this manner perhaps for several hours, my terrors and my anxieties would return again. Perhaps some people will say, I should have exerted my pride, and shewn, at least by my outward conduct, that nothing could humble me. But alas! what a miserable pride is it to have a bad conscience, and to think of dying on a scaffold!—No, I find it is better to derive my comfort from the only true source, which is religion. And I wish that those who blame me now for taking shelter under it, may find in their last hours the same tranquillity it affords me. There is but one thing in this world which makes me really and continually uneasy, which is, that I have seduced others to irreligion and wickedness. I believe I should not properly enjoy my future happiness, if I knew any of those I have deluded, would be eternally unhappy. It is therefore my most fervent wish, and my own happiness depends on it, that God would shew mercy to all those, I have by any means turned from him, and call them

them back to religion and virtue. I pray to God for this fervently."

Some questions being asked concerning his prayers, he said : " He prayed frequently. He held soliloquies in his own heart, and excited himself to confirm and rectify his sentiments more and more. He addressed himself also to God, and begged his assistance for himself and his friends."

He desired me to let him have some of Cramer's sermons, and the *Messiah* of Klopstock. He said, " He had several times attempted to read this poem, but he never had any taste for it. Perhaps the fault might have been his own, because he was ignorant of those doctrines of religion it was grounded upon, and never thought them of any importance. Now as he knew more of religion, and thought quite differently, he would try if the poem might produce good sentiments in his soul."

*The thirtieth Conference. April the 21st.*

THE Count was now so much altered, that some of his former friends, whom I told of his present turn of thoughts and of his conduct, would scarce believe it. However, I had not the least reason to doubt of the sincerity of either. I do not know for what purpose he should have attempted to deceive me. Besides, dissimulation was no part of his character. All those who had an opportunity of seeing him, found him the same as I did, and I in particular had from the beginning guarded myself against being deceived. His present peace of mind seemed to me in particular a sure proof of the effects of religion upon his heart. Among many observations he made to-day, the following seem to be of some importance.

“ I consider it now,” said he, “ as a kind of folly, that the deists pretend to be offended at the humble appearance Christ and the first teachers of Christianity made. I need not observe, that in relation to God, nothing is either little or great, but cannot help remarking that this humble appearance of Christ was very well adapted

adapted to the design of his mission. The common people took him now to be one of their equals, and placed confidence in him. For this reason Christ chose his Apostles among the lower class of mankind, and the Apostles conversed mostly with such. And even these common people were as proper spectators of their miracles as an assembly of philosophers, as they were all of that nature, that nothing more was required to judge of them, than the natural senses and a common share of understanding. A private soldier is perhaps more fit for such an observation, than a general who has his head full of other things, or thinks it not worth his while to attend to it. The evidence which is given by men of common understanding in behalf of Christ's miracles, is therefore worthy of credit. The learned and the philosophers can now consider these facts, and examine whether they are real miracles, and then determine how far they are in favour of Christ and his doctrine."

Lastly, the Count declared, " that he had a sincere love towards God and his Redeemer, that he rejoiced in the blessings of eternity, though he was not anxious as to the time when he should partake of them. The sense of his repentance was not so lively as formerly, since he could apply the comforts of the Gospel to quiet his consci-

ence. I beg of you," added he, "consider of my situation, whether you find me as I should be. Write to Cramer, and desire him to tell his opinion; I am ready to do what he or you shall prescribe."

The Count knew that there was a correspondence between Cramer and me concerning the progress of his conversion; I used to communicate to him those passages in Cramer's letters that related to him. He readily made use of Cramer's reflexions and doubts. He was very desirous of his letters, and enquired even the very last morning of his life, if any of his letters had been received which concerned him.

*The thirty-first Conference. April the 24th.*

THE following observation of the Count will serve to give us an idea of his character.

"Do not mind, said he, if it should be said, you ought to have urged to me arguments which were not so philosophical and more evangelical; I assure you that by no other means you would have found access to my heart than by those you have chosen. There are only three ways which you might have taken: declamation,

stirring up the imagination, and cool enquiry. If you had chosen that of declamation, I should have immediately thought, If the man has a good cause, why does he not propose his reasons without any art : if God has a revealed religion, it must stand the test of enquiry ; I therefore should have heard you without any emotion. If you had endeavoured to stir up my imagination, you must have done it by filling it with terrible descriptions of eternity. This method would have had still less effect than declamation : I was very sure that after death there was nothing either to hope or fear. Any impression you might have made through fear would soon have worn off, and would have entirely vanished by recollecting my former system. The only way left you was that which you chose, I mean, cool enquiry. I will tell you now what resolution I had taken before you came, and for what reasons I entered into conversation with you. About eight days before your first visit to me, the commander of the castle asked me if I chose to converse with a divine ? Thinking, however, that every clergyman would be apt either to preach too much, or tire me with melancholy declamations, I declined the proposal, and said ; I and all divines differ very much in opinion, and I have no inclination to dispute. However, I knew that

that I must expect a clergyman to attend me by order of government; I therefore resolved to receive him civilly, and to hear him with decency and composure. I intended to declare to him, at the end of the first visit, that if he was ordered to see me frequently he would be welcome, but I should beg of him not to entertain any hopes of converting me, for I was too well convinced of my own opinion, and should therefore never enter into any useless disputations.—When you came, my dear friend, I immediately perceived, that you had no intention to declaim to me in the stile of a preacher, or to fill me with fears and terrors, and inflame my imagination. You only desired me, since the matter was of so great consequence, to examine into my own principles, and the evidence for christianity. I found this reasonable, I had time to do it, and fancied I should, by this enquiry, discover that christianity had no foundation, and convince myself more strongly of the truth of my principles. We begun our conferences with great coolness; I read the books you gave me, though with diffidence, yet with attention. This did not continue long, and I could not help perceiving that I had been mistaken. It can scarcely be believed how much it has cost me to own my error, with regard to myself, as well as with regard to you. You may  
remember



remember that I did not from the first deny that I had acted wrong, and had been unhappy in my former situation, and that my conscience reproached me. But, considering my former obstinacy, it was a great victory over myself, to confess that my former principles were false. To proceed so far was only to be done by reason. You are the best judge why you treated me in the manner you have done; but the success entirely justifies you: my conversion is, through the grace of God, luckily brought about. In what manner this is effected must be indifferent to all but you and I. Sensible christians will rejoice that my soul is saved, and that you have chosen this method, which, in regard to me, was the only good one."

Towards the end of our conversation I told him, that this week, in all probability, would be the last of his life, as I knew that next Saturday sentence would be pronounced against him, and that between the sentence and the execution of it, there would be very few days. He received this news with his former resolution and serenity.

"I hope, said he, that I shall certainly meet my death without stupifying fear and anxiety. I am only apprehensive that you will be much

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affected

affected by this shocking scene. If it would have no bad effect upon the spectators, I should desire you not to accompany me to the scaffold."

No, said I, dear Count, I am your only friend, and I dare not leave you. I will comfort you with the hope, which I entertain as a certain one, that you shall be happy in eternity : I will assist you under this severe fate ; and the only recompence I expect, is to see you die as a christian.

*The thirty-second Conference. April the 23d.*

THE Count, after asking me why so many who know the precepts of christianity, do nevertheless not live up to them, related a conversation he had with one of the officers, wherein he attempted to shew, that it was not impossible to practise the laws of christianity. He afterwards desired me to appoint a day when he could receive the sacrament. I imagined that Thursday would be the day of his execution, and as he wished to comply with this solemn institution some time before he suffered, we appointed the Monday following.

*The thirty-third Conference. April the 24th.*

THE Count had yesterday finished his account of his conversion, and he now delivered it to me.

He assured me he had drawn it up with a kind of anxiety, lest he should say any thing which was not strictly conformable to his former and present principles. This was the reason why he had been so long about it. He was afraid he might not have expressed himself in some places with perspicuity and propriety, since he had not for some years written much in the German language, and never upon such a subject ; besides, he had endeavoured to express himself with conciseness, for fear of being too prolix. The employment itself had been very agreeable to him, as it had given him an opportunity of recollecting all the arguments by which he had been convinced, and had now found them so strong, that he was confident he would not redeem his life for all his former prosperity, by any action which might contradict his present conviction. He desired me now to read what he had drawn up, to judge whether it answered that intention for which it was written.

I then read the whole before him, and found some obscure passages, expressions and ideas, which might be misunderstood by christians and unbelievers, and made my remarks upon them. Some of these passages he altered with his own hand, some he rather chose to leave as they were.

“ I have drawn up, said he, this account, to convince christians, as well as those which are not, and in whose hands this may fall; that I became a christian after mature consideration, and that I die such. I am pretty well acquainted with the turn of thinking of the last, and will prevent them from saying that I turned christian from fear, and weakness of understanding: I must endeavour to convince them, that I have examined the subject, and reasoned upon it, to shew them, for instance, what is my opinion of the mysteries of religion, and why I do not think them contradictory to reason. If such of my readers as are christians should find my ideas not altogether as they should be, or my expressions sometimes improper, I hope they will not be surprized, considering how new these truths are to me, and how little I am qualified to speak or to write about them. You know, my dear friend, how I now believe, without any further reasoning or explanation or insight into the connexion of the  
whole

whole system, every thing that Christ has taught, because his word is sufficient for me."

The Monday following, as I have mentioned already, was appointed for receiving the sacrament. I told the Count, that since it was a solemn action, and at the same time a public confession of his christianity, I thought it proper that it should be celebrated before some witnesses, that were known to be true christians. He answered :

" I wished to receive it with Count Brandt, but since this will be matter of difficulty, I beg of you to intreat the commander of the castle to be present."

The Count did not appear to me to-day to be so serene and chearful as he used to be. I enquired what could be the reason of it, and he gave me the following answer :

" You know that to-morrow I expect my sentence ; this has induced me to reflect on former times. I thought if I had not acted in such a manner as I have done, I should not have come into this misery ; it has made me rather uneasy : however you may be sure that this uneasiness will soon pass over ; I have found already sufficient reason to be above such re-

flexions, since they are at present ill-timed and entirely unnecessary.

*The thirty-fourth Conference. April the 25th.*

“ **V** Oluptuousness, said the Count, is the source of all my misfortunes ; ambition has only contributed to hasten and complete them. I have told you already, that when I first came into Denmark I intended to cut as great a figure as my situation would permit. I then did not think of obtaining that power, to which I was raised ; I could have satisfied myself with being eminent in my profession as a physician. You will find this to be true from what I am going to tell you. I had resolved to leave Altona, to resign my station there. I intended to go to Malaga, and to settle there as a physician, or to make a voyage to the East Indies. I had the following reasons for my first resolution. I was, at the time I took it, rather in ill health, and hoped a milder climate would agree better with me. The notion that the pleasures of voluptuousness would be greater and more pleasing in a warmer climate, were a matter also of some consequence. The many fine things in the East Indies, which I had read in voyages, and which  
had

had warmed my imagination, determined me more for the East Indies than for Malaga : besides the great hopes I had of making a fortune, and satisfying those desires which made me think at first of Malaga. Now a prospect opened itself to me, of making my fortune in Denmark. I seized on the favourable opportunity. And why ? I am almost ashamed to say it was owing to an acquaintance procured by a love intrigue which brought me hither. How greatly must I detest my former way of thinking, which made me follow a wild passion which always was blind ! And how much am I now punished for it !”

He was just speaking of several things which concerned his heart, of his affections towards his parents and family, of his complying with his fate, when his council came into the room to acquaint him with his sentence. “ Good Count, said he, I bring you bad news.” He then pulled a copy of the sentence out of his pocket.

“ I expected nothing else, said the Count ; let me see.”

He read. I fixed my eyes upon him with great attention, but I did not observe the least

alteration in his countenance. After he had read it, he gave it to me. It was as follows :

“ In consequence of the Danish statute law, book vi. chapter iv. art. 1. It is hereby declared just and right, that Count John Frederick Struensee, for his due punishment, and that he may be an example to terrify others, has forfeited his honour, his life, and his estates. He shall be degraded from his dignity as Count, and all other dignities which have been conferred upon him. His coat of arms, which he had as Count, shall be broken by the common hangman. Likewise shall John Frederick Struensee's right hand, and afterwards his head, be cut off, his body shall be quartered and laid upon the wheel, and his head and his hand shall be stuck upon a pole.”

During the time that I was reading this sentence and trembled, he began to talk with composure with his council, and asked if all the points of his accusations had been regarded in framing his sentence. The counsel answered in the affirmative. “ And what will be the fate of Brandt?” His sentence is exactly the same as yours. “ And could his council do nothing in order to save him?” He has said every thing that could be said in his favour, but Count  
Brandt



Brandt has too much laid to his charge. The Count was more moved at this, than at his own fate. However he soon recollected himself, wrote something to what he had drawn up for his council, and returned it to him.

When we were alone, I assured him of my sincere compassion, and exhorted him to suffer his fate with the patience and submission of a christian.

“ I assure you,” said he, “ I am very easy about that. Such punishments should make an impression upon others, and therefore they ought to be severe. I had prepared myself for this and more. I thought I might perhaps be broken upon the wheel, and was already considering whether I could suffer this kind of death with patience. If I have deserved it, my infamy would not be removed, though those disgraceful circumstances were not annexed to it. And if I had not deserved it, which I cannot assert, sensible people would do me justice, and I should gain in point of honour. And upon the whole, what is honour or infamy in this world to me? My judges had the law before them, and therefore they could not judge otherwise. I confess my crime is great ;  
I have

I have violated the Majesty of the King. Many things I might not have done if I had been sufficiently acquainted with the law—But why did I neglect it?”

To be sure, said I, you only are to blame. One of your crimes, of which there is not the least doubt, is not only a crime against the King's Majesty, but also against the whole nation, and it would be looked upon as such in any other country. That unlawful power which you usurped to yourself, is likewise a crime against the constitution of Denmark. And though perhaps you might not think you had been guilty of high treason on this account, yet the fact is proved, and the law is clear. He owned all this, and I was sorry to have said so many disagreeable things to him. He added:

“ I must only beg of you to be upon your guard, lest you should be too much affected when I go to die. The friendship I have for you, from which I cannot but sympathize with you, would make me very uneasy to see you suffer. Let us however continue our conversation calmly and composed to the last. Upon the scaffold speak to me as little as possible, and as you shall think proper. I shall certainly do as much as lies in my power to direct my thoughts  
towards

towards God and my Redeemer. I shall not take my leave of you. Believe me, that without this ceremony, which likely might discompose my mind, I know and feel how much I owe you."

My readers will recollect how much this unhappy man was moved by a letter he received from his father, at a time when he still maintained his irreligious principles. Now they have seen with what a composure of mind he heard his sentence, after he was become a christian.

He delivered to me the following letter for his parents, and left it to me, whether I would send it now or after his death. I chose the latter, because I knew his execution was very near, and I would save them the anxiety of expecting the melancholy news of it. The letter was as follows :

"Your letters have encreased my pain, but I have found in them that love which you always expressed for me. The memory of all that sorrow which I have given you, by living contrary to your good advice, and the great affliction my imprisonment and death must cause you,  
grieves

grieves me the more, since, enlightened by truth, I see clearly the injury I have done. With the most sincere repentance, I beg your pardon and forgiveness. I owe my present situation to my belief in the doctrine and redemption of Christ. Your prayers and your good example have contributed much towards it. Be assured, that your son has found that great good, which you believe to be the only true one. Look upon his misfortune as the means which made him obtain it. All impressions which my fate could make upon you, will be weakened by this, as it has effaced them with me. I recommend myself to your further intercession before God. I pray incessantly to Christ my Redeemer, that he may enable you to bear your present calamities. I owe the same to his assistance. My love to my brother and sisters. I am, with all filial respect, &c."

*The thirty-fifth Conference. April the 26th.*

**I** Heard from General lieutenant Holben, the commander of the castle, that Struensee had been very uneasy all last night: That he had kicked with his feet, gnashed with his teeth, and gnawed his fingers. The officer upon guard got up to him, but found him fast asleep. I enquired

enquired of my unfortunate friend, whether he had been troubled with disagreeable dreams. He said :

“ That when he awaked in the morning, he remembered nothing but the bringing to his memory all the arguments, by which ~~he~~ was convinced of the truth of christianity. Of the uneasiness of his body he remembered nothing.”

I had to acquaint him with the melancholy news that his sentence was confirmed in every particular circumstance, and that it was to be executed the day after to-morrow. I hoped he would hear it with a composed mind, and it happened so. As to those circumstances which were to throw infamy upon his death, he expressed himself thus :

“ I am far above all this, and I wish my friend Brandt may be the same. Here in this world, since I am on the point of leaving it, neither honour nor infamy can affect me any more. It is equally the same to me after death, whether my body putrifies under ground or in the open air, whether it serves to feed the worms or the birds. God will know very well how to preserve those particles of my body, which, on the day of resurrection, are to constitute my future glorified

glorified body. It is not my all which is to be laid upon the wheel. Thank God! I know now very well that this dust is not my whole being."

When I told him that next Tuesday would be his dying day, he answered :

" I thought it would be Friday. However, I do not wish even for this short delay. It would be the same as if I was to undergo a painful operation for my health, and should desire to have it delayed when it was just going to be performed. I should be obliged to submit to it at last, and I should only recover my health later." —He then went through all the circumstances of his death, and compared them with those of the death of Christ, and found that Jesus had suffered infinitely more for his sake, than he was to suffer on account of his crimes. He praised the power of prayer in comforting him, when he was now and then anxious about the step he was to take.

I am unable to describe the ease and tranquillity with which he spoke. I expected much from the power of religion over his heart, but it exceeded my most sanguine expectations.

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He assured me that religion, and his firm hopes of being pardoned by God, had produced this ease of mind. He owned that his natural coolness of temper, his using himself for many years to keep his imagination within bounds, and his entertaining himself rather with reflections of sound reason than images of fancy, had in some respects supported him; but he was convinced that all this, without religion, would never have composed his mind. God had adapted it for all kind of tempers and for all characters. It was fit for all men, and it found in him a good soil to produce all its good effects of tranquillity and fortitude in adversity. He added: “ Although the way which leads me out of this world is very disagreeable, yet I have reason to praise God that he has made choice of it; that he has shewn me the approaching death aforehand, and at the same time has extricated me out of the pleasures and dissipations of this life. In no other manner should I have become acquainted with truth, or should have reformed my sentiments; though I am sure I should have adopted christianity in all situations of life, if I had known it so well as I do now: And yet, I never should have taken proper time to examine into it. When I formerly thought on death, it had but little effect upon me. I rather suppressed

suppressed it, sometimes by thinking it was a fate which could not be avoided, and therefore was not to be called into our thoughts before there was occasion for it: sometimes, by persuading myself it was folly to imbitter the present enjoyments, by thinking on what was to come. Even when I was in danger of my life, I avoided looking into futurity. I have been sometimes so dangerously ill, that my life has been despaired of; I have been riding furiously, and no longer ago than last summer broke my arm, by being thrown from my horse, but it never entered my thoughts to look one step further than this present life.

Being reminded of self-examination, he said, "he did it every day. It was an occupation he liked."—Among other things, he said: "I know my administration of state affairs is very blameable before God and men, and my own conscience, on account of the bad principles by which I was actuated, namely, levity, haste, pride and selfishness. How far they are wrong, either upon the whole or singly considered in a political light, I am unable indeed to determine, because I shall not live to see the consequences. However, I must expect to have been subject to error in my political principles, as well as I have



have been in my religious ones. I leave this point to be decided by those that survive me, and I submit to their judgment. This only I can and must say, (for I should speak untruth if I was to speak otherwise) that I am not conscious of any bad intentions."

After this a conversation ensued about the Lord's Supper. When it was finished, I told him that a poor peasant, who met me to-day in the street, called out to me: 'Father, do what you can to convince Struensee that he has sinned against our Lord Jesus Christ; and if he acknowledges this he will be saved.' The Count was much pleased, on account of the christian love which this man had shewn; and observed that christianity could instill sentiments of humanity into the minds of illiterate people whose souls were not refined by education.

"Reading," said he, "will not sufficiently entertain me at present, therefore I have been writing to-day." Among the rest he had written the following letter to Lady Perkentin at Pinneberg, which he desired me to take care that it might be safely delivered. The following is the letter.

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My Lady,

“ I make use of the first moments, which permit me to write to you. Business, duties, and my late connexions, have perhaps lessened in me the remembrance of my former friends, but they have not been able to obliterate their memory entirely. My present leisure has revived it the more lively. If my silence has raised suspicion against my former sentiments, I beg pardon of all those that are intitled to my gratitude, and of you, my Lady, in particular. This, however, is not the only advantage, which the change of my fate has produced. I owe my knowledge of truth to it, it has procured me a happiness of which I had no more expectation, since I had already lost sight of it. I intreat you to consider my misfortunes in no other light but that of religion. I gain more by it than ever I can lose, and I feel and assure you of this with conviction, ease and joy of heart. I beg of you to repeat what I now write, in the house of Count Ahlefeld and at Ranzau. I am under great obligations to these two families, and it has grieved me the more, to have drawn with me into misfortunes, persons which are related to them. Permit me, my Lady, to  
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add to this, my respects to Lady Thun, and the family of Mr. de Waitz. I remain, with most respectful sentiments, &c."

*April the 26th, 1772.*

*The thirty-fifth Conference. April the 26th.*

I Came to-day to the Count with general lieutenant Hoben, who, at my request, was present at his receiving the sacrament. I administered it to him; and this man, who received his sentence of death without any appearing alteration of mind, was during the whole time of this sacred transaction, as if he was melting into tears. I never observed a tear in his eyes as often as we were talking about his misfortunes and death; but on account of his sins, his moral misery into which he had thrown himself and others; on account of the love of God towards him and all mankind, he has wept more than I myself should believe, if I had not seen it.

When the whole transaction of receiving the sacrament was over, he begged leave of the commander of the castle, to make presents of the trifles that he had left, his bed, his linen,

and the little money which he had saved out of his allowance, which was a rixdollar or a crown every day. He said, “ I have now no more property.”

He then took his farewell of the commander, in a very affecting manner ; thanked him for all kindness he had shewn him, and declared, that he had not denied him any favour that was in his power to grant. The old venerable man left him with these words : “ I am sure we shall find one another again before the throne of God.”

When we were alone again, he said : “ Nothing is now of great importance to me, but to be certain, that I shall appear before God with all possible sincerity and uprightness of sentiment. I therefore have examined myself once more carefully, and I find a kind of pleasure in it, because it is my duty. I am conscious that I perform every thing cheerfully and without the least reluctance, since, enlightened by christianity, I have learnt what is my duty. Thus have I thought myself obliged, to draw up the account of my conversion, which is in your possession, to efface as much as possible that impression, which I have made upon others by my conversation

conversation and example. I can assure you, I felt more satisfaction in writing it, than ever I did in drawing up other things, that concerned partly my defence. I have more minutely examined my administration of state affairs ; and I can, according to my conscience, judge of, it no otherwise than I told you yesterday. I go into eternity, conscious that it was not my intention to make the King or the nation unhappy. It is true, I have, within a short time, amassed considerable riches, and taken advantage of the King's favour towards me, in a manner I cannot answer for ; but I never have falsified the accounts, though much in this respect seems to be against me, and I can blame nobody who thinks me in this respect likewise culpable."

. It is difficult to dismiss every suspicion on this head against Struensee. And if he was guilty, of how little value would be his conversion ! It has made me uneasy frequently, and even now still after his death. All manner of appearances, his own confession, that he could not free himself from all suspicion, and many other evidences are against him. However, on the other side, it makes me easy that he confessed greater and more punishable crimes, without

constraint, but denied this with a firmness, calmness of mind and confidence, which, inexplicable as the matter remains, makes it difficult to believe him guilty.

“ I have traced out, continued he, the origin from which my present calmness and tranquillity proceeds. I am sure they are quite different from those which afforded me comfort in my former misfortunes. It is quite impossible in my present situation, to draw my thoughts from my imminent danger by dissipation. Approaching death is not so easily expelled from one’s thoughts. I feel no more of any pride. I am too sensible how little I am in this my prison. I detest the principle that teaches, there are no expectations after death. Nothing but the assurance of the divine mercy through faith in Christ, and the consciousness that I spare no pains to make my sentiments acceptable before God, comforts and composes me.”

“ However,” added he, “ this my ease makes me not idle; for I continue, and shall do so until to the very last, to search earnestly after all those things in me which still may displease God, that I may remove them as much as possible.”

Among the many proofs he gave of this, I shall only mention the following, because it shews how scrupulously conscientious he was.

“ I think, said he, that it is the duty of a christian to pray before he sits down to a meal, though my sentiments in this respect ~~do~~ not favour superstition. It is but just, to direct our thoughts on such occasions, full of gratitude, towards him who supplies our wants in this way. I therefore have made it for some time a rule to pray before and after dinner and supper. However, my old custom had frequently so much power over me, that I oftentimes sat down to eat before I had said grace. Now it may be equally the same whether I direct my thoughts towards God, before or after having taken two or three spoonfuls of soup; but it has vexed me to find that my old careless way of thinking has made me forget, what I thought to be my duty.”

How do my readers like the conscientiousness of a man, who formerly indulged himself in every thing his passions drove him to?

*The thirty-seventh Conference. April the 27th.*

**I** Found him to-day in the most unfeigned tranquillity of mind, to which indeed I had been witness for several weeks past, but which appeared more and more striking to me the nearer the time of his death advanced. I praised God in my heart, who shewed so much mercy to this unhappy man! How often did I wish that I might not be the only man upon earth, who heard him speak so composedly about his death.

He had written another letter to the Chamberlain de Brandt, the brother of the unhappy Count, which he desired me to get delivered. Several other papers, which he had written in his prison, were inclosed in a cover, and sealed up by me in the presence of the commander of the castle, who once more did us the favour to come into the prison. The other papers, which consisted of those writings of mine, which I had given him from time to time, and the two letters of his parents to him, he delivered to me likewise.—And now he had set his house in order.—

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The following is the letter to the Chamberlain de Brandt.

“ Sir,

“ Permit me to bewail with you and the Lady your mother, the fate of our dear Enevold. Do not think me unworthy of sharing this your grief with you, though accidentally I have been the cause of it. You know how much I love him. He was the man of all the world who possessed the largest share of my friendship. His misfortunes give me the greatest anxiety, and my own have been on this account most painful to me. He has shared my prosperity with me, and I trust that we now both together shall enjoy that happiness which our Redeemer has promised us. I do not know any thing wherewith I could comfort you. You are acquainted with religion. There I found refuge to comfort me on account of my misfortune. I pray to God, that he in this very moment will let you feel all its power. I shall not cease to entertain a most lively sense of gratitude for all those persons, which are dear to me at Ranzau. I am wholly your's.”

*April the 27th, 1772.*

“ P. S. I have been in hopes, and still flatter myself, that the sentence of my friend will be mitigated.”

The subject of our to-day's conversation was chiefly upon the redemption of Christ. I repeated mostly what I had spoken on the subject already when we purposely treated on it. He said many striking and edifying things on this occasion; but the emotion my heart was in, prevented my perfect remembrance of each particular. The following is part of it

“ I look upon the reconciliation of men to God, through the death of Christ, as the only means of receiving forgiveness of sins. Every thing else, which is believed to serve the same purpose, is apparently insufficient. But this is conformable to all our notions of God; it produces ideas suitable to the attributes of God; it is founded on the best reasons, and procures us comfort and cheerfulness at the time when death approaches. Whoever will not adopt and make use of this redemption, declares that he will neither be virtuous, nor fear God; for he rejects the strongest motives which God could ever propose to mankind, to fear him and to love virtue; he flights the assistance of God, without which nobody can be honest or good.”

He added: “ I leave the world, fully convinced of the truth of the christian religion.”

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I then turned our conversation upon the love of a pious christian towards God, I shewed him how much we were obliged to this love on account of the redemption, and asked him how he found his love towards God and his Redeemer. He said :

“ I look upon God and Christ as my best friends; and in this view I consider those obligations of love which I owe to God and my Redeemer. I first must know and feel for what I am indebted to my friend and benefactor. He is desirous of making me happy, he finds the means of doing it, he sacrifices on my account what he loves and what is dear to him. As long as I do not acknowledge this, or do not know how to value the same, so long am I unworthy of his friendship, and do not love him. I am further obliged to shew my readiness to act according to his intentions : else I am ungrateful, and want him to be my friend only for self-interest, and to do nothing myself that was worthy of his friendship. You see here the principles according to which I love God and my Redeemer. I know what God has done for me, and what it has cost Christ to procure my salvation. I know how great the blessing is which I shall enjoy through him. But I am likewise  
conscious

conscious that I do, whatever I can, to act according to the will of God, to rectify my sentiments, and to prepare myself for death in a manner which may be acceptable before God. I submit without the least reluctance to his will in regard to myself, because I know he loves me. I look upon my death, and all those awful and ignominious circumstances that are to attend it, as things which God found necessary for my own good. In the beginning of my confinement, I thought quite different from what I do now, even when I recollected that my affairs might perhaps turn out in the manner that they do now. I wished to fall sick and to die. I even had the thought of abstaining from eating and to starve myself to death : yet I never should have laid hands on myself, though I should have had an opportunity for it. I now praise God heartily that neither of the two has taken place."

I told him, that these sentiments gave me great satisfaction in regard to his salvation, and that I saw now how great reason he had to be so calm and so composed as I found him.

" Yes, thanks be to God, said he, I am as satisfied as a man can be who sees his greatest happiness before him. I therefore humbly adore the

the mercy of God, and the power of religion. If it happens that my tranquillity is interrupted for some moments, it is caused by the wish to be convinced that I have fulfilled all those conditions under which God will grant me mercy, and that I am such as God wants me to be. I therefore have taken the book of Spalding into my hands again, to satisfy myself on this point." I answered,

That I did not know of any other conditions of our salvation, and the Bible taught us no other but these two: an unlimited confidence in God through Christ, and a zeal to think and to act always according to the will of God. And since he was conscious that he believed in Christ, and that he loved God, he had no reason to doubt of his being pardoned before God. He then said:

" I have examined myself in all respects I could think of, and I find nothing that can make me uneasy. If I found any thing of this kind, I should have told you of it, and have asked your advice. But how easily may I have overlooked many things which are known to God; and if so, what will he do?"

He will forgive you, said I; because you have done what you could do in those circumstances you were in. We cannot raise ourselves to perfection.

We afterwards consulted and settled how we should act to-morrow, it being the day when he was to die. I promised to be with him some hours before he went to the scaffold; for, according to the King's order, I durst not go along with him to the place of execution; I was to go before him, and to receive him there.

He desired me to carry on our conversation to-morrow, as composedly and as coolly as hitherto. He wished that we might finish what we had to do on the scaffold as quick as possible, and that I might keep up my spirits, that he might not see me suffer. As for himself, he should say nothing there but what he thought absolutely necessary; for he would direct his thoughts entirely towards God, and that eternity he was to enter into.

I told him, that according to the ritual I was to ask him a great many questions, but that I thought I had a right of shortening them. I did this in his presence, wrote the questions down,  
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which I was to ask him, and read them to him afterwards.

“ I do not chuse, said he, to see my brother and to take leave of him, on account of the tenderness of our situation. I beg therefore of you to do it in my name. I intreat his pardon, for drawing him with me into misfortunes, but I hope and am certain that his affairs will turn out well. I assure him of my leaving this world with true brotherly affection for him. Tell him likewise of the sentiments in which I die, and how you find me.”

This commission, which was the most tender and most moving I ever had, I discharged, by the leave of the commander, this very evening, and carried back the answer of the much affected brother.

*The thirty-eighth Conference. April the 28th.*

According to the account of the officer who had the watch that night, the Count, who now was certainly no more an unhappy man, had been reading a good while the preceeding evening,  
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and went to bed pretty early. He had slept for five or six hours together very soundly. When he wakened in the morning, he had spent a good while in deep meditation. He then got up, dressed himself, and conversed with the officer very composedly.

I found him lying on a couch, dressed as he intended to go to the place of execution. He was reading Shlegel's sermons on the sufferings of Christ, and received me with his usual serene and composed countenance. He said :

“ I was thinking last night whether it might not strengthen me in my way to death, if I was to fill my fancy with agreeable images of eternity and future bliss. I might have used for this purpose *Lavater's Prospects into Eternity*: but I will not venture to do this. I rather think it better to take this great step in cool consideration. Fancy, if once put in agitation, can soon take a false turn. It could dismiss (perhaps) at once, my agreeable and pleasing prospects of eternity, and eagerly catch at the formidable circumstances of death, by which means I fear that I should be unmanned. Even in going to the place of execution, I will not indulge it, but rather employ my  
reason



reason in meditating on the walk of Christ to his death, and apply it to myself."

He then desired me, if I thought it necessary, to assure his judges in his name once more, that what he had confessed, was in all respects the truth, and that he had not wilfully concealed any thing, which he himself or others could be charged with. He continued :

" When I awoke this morning and found that it was daylight, my whole body was seized with a vehement trembling. I took directly to prayer, and considered the comforts of religion. I prayed for the King, that God's wisdom and mercy might guide him, and that he personally might be perfectly happy. I soon recovered my spirits again. I am now calm and composed, and I am sure I shall remain so. Why should I make myself uneasy, when I am fully convinced of my salvation? God has forgiven me my sins, and even those which I do not remember; he has pardoned me for those things which he still dislikes in me, and which I by self-examination could not discover, and therefore could not reform. God can not forgive vice in general, without doing the same in every particular species of vice. The remembrance of the

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sufferings of Christ, who has satisfied God for all men, assure me of this. And since I am so certain of my salvation, I do not dread death. Fear of death would be inconsistent under circumstances so full of a happy eternity. Besides, I cannot complain that my fate is too hard. I know that I deserve this and still more. But, “who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?—Who is he that condemneth?”

I took the opportunity he gave me, to explain to him the whole eighth chapter of St. Paul to the Romans: There were so many beautiful passages which were excellently well adapted to his former and his present situation. The most visible calmness was to be observed in his whole countenance; and he frequently prevented my going on, by falling into the same observations I was just going to make in order to strengthen his faith.

He now asked me: “How far am I permitted to keep up my fortitude by natural means? For instance: by endeavouring to retain presence of mind, and not to permit myself to be carried away by imagination and fancy.” I answered,

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If God has given you a certain strength of soul, it is his will that you shall make use of it, in those moments when you stand most in need of it. But no inward pride or any ill-founded complacency is to interfere. You are to do nothing merely for the sake of being applauded by the spectators on account of your resolution and composure. You are to be above such things. God loves sincerity, which consists in shewing ourselves outwardly as we are inwardly. Shew yourself therefore exactly in the manner as you feel yourself within. If you even should be so much affected as to shed tears; do not hide them, and do not be ashamed of them; for they are no dishonour to you. You cannot conceal from yourself, even unto the very last moment of your life, why you are to die. You would do wrong, and offend true christians, if you were to die with a chearfulness, which can only fall to the share of those that suffer for the sake of truth and virtue. I wish to see you on the scaffold with visible signs of repentance and sorrow, but at the same time with a peace of mind which arises from a confidence of being pardoned before God. I should even dislike to see you conceal the natural fear of death. He said:

“ I am certainly not inclined to make any shew before men. Nothing can be now more inte-

resting to me than to please God, and to conquer the terrors of death. If I should force myself to appear outwardly different from what I am within, it would happen to me what happens to a man, who is to speak to an eminent person, and has well considered every thing he is going to say, but now begins to stammer, and, by endeavouring to prevent this, becomes quite speechless. I shall, as much as lies in my power, direct my thoughts towards God, and not disturb myself by studying to satisfy the expectation of the spectators. Therefore I shall say nothing on the scaffold, but what you yourself shall give me occasion for."

I assure you, said I, I shall give you very few opportunities for it; the scaffold is neither for you nor for me the place for speaking much. When you are there, it will be your business to strengthen your thoughts as much as possible, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.

"Now, said he, since I am so near death, I find how necessary and how beneficial to men the positive assertion of Christ is of the existence of eternity. If I was not sure of this, mere reason would give me but little satisfaction upon this question: Whether a few hours hence any thing  
would

would be left of me that retained its life?—I can likewise tell you, from my present experience, that a bad conscience is worse than death. I now find comfort against death, but as long as the former lasted, I had no peace within me. I believe that I should have become quite hardened, if this wound had not been healed.”

“ I believe you have observed, that I would not let those sensations which were produced by my certainty of being pardoned before God, grow very lively. They might have hindered me in my studying to reform my heart, and in examining myself. But now I enjoy the comfort of being conscious to have done what I could to please God.”

In the abovementioned letter to the chamberlain de Brandt, he had said that he had become innocently the cause of his brother's misfortunes. He desired me to explain these words to him : “ That he, with a good intention, had brought his friend Brandt to Copenhagen, and had kept him from withdrawing himself when he had a good opportunity for it.”

Now the door of the prison opened, for which the Count himself never, but I very often, had looked with a fearful expectation.—An officer

came in, and desired me, if I pleased, to step into the coach, and to go before the Count to the place of execution. I was much moved and affected. The Count, as if it did not concern him in the least, comforted me by saying:

“ Make yourself easy, my dear friend, by considering the happiness I am going to enter into, and with the consciousness that God has made you a means of procuring it for me.”

I embraced him, recommending him to the love and mercy of God, and hastened to the place of execution.

He being soon called after me, got up from his couch, and followed those which were to conduct him. Coming out of the prison and getting into the coach, he bowed to those that were standing around. Upon the way to the place of execution, he partly spoke to the officer who was with him in the coach, partly sat in deep meditation.

As soon as both the condemned were arrived in their respective coaches near the scaffold, and Count Brandt had mounted it first, I got into the coach of Struensee, and ordered the coachman to turn about, to prevent his having the prospect of the scaffold,

“ I have

“ I have seen him already,” said he. I could not recollect myself so soon, and he finding my uneasiness, said, with a smiling countenance, “ Pray do not mind me. I see you suffer. Remember that God has made you an instrument in my conversion. I can imagine how pleasing it must be to you to be conscious of this. I shall praise God with you in eternity that you have saved my soul.”

I was still more affected than before, and said, that I should look upon this transaction of mine as the most remarkable one during my whole life, since God had blessed it with so self-rewarding a success. It was a pleasing thought to me, that we should continue our friendship in a future world.—I should have comforted him, but he, in this case, comforted me. He desired me then to remember him to several of his acquaintance, and to tell some of them, that if he, by his conversation and actions, had misled them in their notions of virtue and religion, he, as a dying man, acknowledged the injury he had done, begged them to efface these impressions, and to forgive him.

After some silence on both sides, he asked me: “ Suppose God, since he knows all things, should see that in case I had lived longer, I should

not have kept faithfully to my present principles and sentiments; could that have any influence upon that judgment which I shall soon receive?" I answered,

God judges by actions that are committed, not by those that are not. He judges men according as he finds them when they leave this world. He is love itself, and has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. He certainly will not condemn any one who dies in fulfilling those conditions under which he has promised his pardon. He then continued :

" It is true, I returned late to God, but I know that he who is from eternity, cares not for the length or shortness of time in which man has endeavoured to please him. Our Saviour says, without determining any thing relative to this matter, " He that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out;" I therefore will make myself easy that I have kept so long from God and virtue."

On seeing the great number of spectators, I told him, that among these thousands, were many that would pray to God to have mercy upon him.

" I hope so, said he, and the thought pleases me." He soon after added :

" It



“ It is a solemn sight to see so many thousands of people together; but what are these thousands, when compared with the whole sum of all God’s creatures, and how very little appears one single man in such a comparison? Nevertheless God loves every individual man so much, that he has procured his salvation by sacrificing his own son. What a love is this !

“ You see me, continued he, outwardly, the same as I find myself within.” And I perceived, all the while I was sitting with him in the coach, no alteration, but that he was pale, and that it was more difficult for him to think and to converse than it was some days before, or even this very morning. However, he had his full presence of mind, knew several of those that stood about the coach, bowed to many by pulling off his hat, and to some he bowed with a friendly mien.

“ My ease, said he, is not a forced one. I cannot recollect any cause from which this ease arises, that could displease God. I am not ambitious to gain the applause of men, and I do not promise that I shall not shew any uneasiness upon the scaffold. I now have disagreeable sensations, and I shall have more there, which I will not endeavour to conceal. But you may be assured, that my soul will look with calmness  
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and hope beyond death. And how little is that which I am going to suffer, when I compare it with the sufferings Christ bore when he died. Recollect only his words : “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? ” and consider, what excruciating pain it must have caused him, to hang for several hours on the cross before he died ! ”

I exhorted him again not to shew any affected fortitude in these last moments which was not natural to him. Such affectations would certainly displease God, and if he now still would mind what the spectators might think, I must tell him, that only a few short-sighted people would believe his affected firmness to be true.

I then said : Christ prayed for his murderers even on the cross. May I rely upon your leaving this world with the same sentiments of love towards those you might have reason to think your enemies ?

“ First, said he, I hope that there is no one who has a personal hatred against me ; but that those who have promoted my misfortunes, have done it with an intent of doing good. Secondly, I look upon myself already as a citizen of ano-

ther world, and that I am obliged to entertain sentiments conformable to this dignity : and I am sure, that if I was to see those, who might perhaps be my enemies, here in the bliss of that world which I hope to enter into, it would give me the highest satisfaction. I pray to God, that if my enemies might repent of their behaviour towards me, this repentance may induce them to look out for that salvation which I promise myself through the mercy of God."

Though I could not see the scaffold, yet I guessed, from the motion of the spectators, that it was Struensee's turn to mount it. I endeavoured to prepare him for it by a short prayer, and within a few moments we were called. He passed with decency and humbleness through the spectators, and bowed to some of them. With some difficulty he mounted the stairs. When we came up, I spoke very concisely, and with a low voice, upon these words of Christ : " He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." It would have been impossible for me to speak much and loud, even if I had attempted it.

I observe here that he shewed not the least affectation in his conduct upon the scaffold : I found

found him to be one who knew that he was to die, on account of his crimes, by the hands of the executioner. He was pale, it was difficult for him to speak, the fear of death was visible in his whole countenance; but at the same time, submission, calmness and hope were expressed in his air and deportment.

His sentence, and afterwards the King's confirmation of it, were read to him; his coat of arms was publicly shewn and broken to pieces. During the time that his chains were taking off, I put the following questions to him: Are you truly sorry for all those actions by which you have offended God and men?

“ You know my late sentiments on this point, and I assure you they are this very moment still the same.”

Do you trust in the redemption of Christ, as the only ground of your being pardoned before God?

“ I know no other means of receiving God's mercy, and I trust in this alone.”

Do you leave this world without hatred or malice against any person whatever?

“ I hope

“ I hope nobody hates me personally ; and as for the rest, you know my sentiments on this head, they are the same as I told you just before.”

I then laid my hand upon his head, saying : Then go in peace whither God calls you ! His grace be with you !

He then began to undress, and enquired of the executioners how far he was to uncover himself, and desired them to assist him. He then hastened towards the block, that was stained and still reeking with the blood of his friend, laid himself quickly down, and endeavoured to fit his neck and chin properly into it. When his hand was cut off, his whole body fell into convulsions. The very moment when the executioner lifted up the axe to cut off his hand, I began to pronounce slowly the words ; “ Remember Jesus Christ crucified, who died, but is risen again.” Before I had finished these words, both hand and head, severed from the body, lay before my feet.



How wonderful is God, and how great his care for the salvation of men, that are still capable of being saved ! But how different is the judgment we are to pronounce over such men,  
according

according to the principles of the kingdom of God; from that which the world pronounces! If Count Struensee had remained in his former prosperity, and died a natural death, he might have been called a great and enlightened man through all ages, even if he had been at the bottom the greatest villain. The world has seen him die a malefactor; but the disposition in which he left the world, will be a sufficient inducement for true christians to forgive him the ignominy where-with he had stained his life, and to praise God that he died well.

COUNT STRUENSEE'S

OWN ACCOUNT

How he came to alter his SENTIMENTS of  
RELIGION.

WRITTEN WITH HIS OWN HAND.





## To Dr. MUNTER.

YOU desire, dear friend, that I should leave behind me \* my thoughts, how I was induced to alter my sentiments in regard to religion. You have been witness of it. You have been my guide, and therefore I am infinitely obliged to you. I satisfy your desire with so much greater pleasure, as it will afford me an opportunity of recollecting the train of ideas and impressions of mind which have produced my present sentiments, and confirm my present conviction.

My unbelief and my aversion to religion, were founded neither upon an accurate inquiry into its truth, nor upon a critical examination of those doubts that are generally made against it. They arose, as is usual in such cases, from a very general and superficial knowledge of religion on one side, and much inclination to disobey it's precepts on the other, together with a readiness to entertain every objection which I discovered

\* The reader will recollect what is said about this account in the Preface, and p. 142, 143, 163, 164.

against it. You know how indifferent that common instruction in religion is, which is given in public schools : yet I was to blame not to have made use of the private instructions and example of my parents. Since my fourteenth year, all my time was taken up in studying physic. If I afterwards spent much time in reading other books, it was only to divert myself, and to extend my knowledge of those sciences by means of which I hoped to make my fortune. The violence of the passions which made me abandon myself in my youth to all sensual pleasures and extravagancies, left me scarce time to think of morality, much less of religion.

When experience afterwards taught me how little satisfaction was to be found in the irregular enjoyment of such pleasures, and reflection convinced me that a certain inward satisfaction was requisite for my happiness, such as cannot be attained either by the observance of particular duties, or by the omission of scandalous excesses : I therefore endeavoured to imprint in my mind such principles as I judged proper to govern my actions, and which I thought would answer the end I had in view. But how did I undertake this task? My memory was filled up with moral principles, but at the same time, I  
had

had various excuses to reconcile a complying reason with the weaknesses and the infirmities of the human heart. My understanding was prepossessed with doubts and difficulties, against the infallibility of those means by which we arrive at truth and certainty. My will was (if not fully determined, yet) secretly much inclined to comply only with such duties, as did not lay me under the necessity of sacrificing my favourite inclinations. These were my guides in my researches.

I took it for granted, that in matters merely relative to the happiness of man, neither a deep understanding nor wit or learning were required; but our own experience and ideas only, of which every one must be conscious, were sufficient to find out the truth. The necessity of avoiding all disagreeable sensations of pain, of sickness, of reproaches, as well our own as those of others, made me think that an exact observation of duties towards myself and my neighbour, were of the greatest consequence. However, I believed, from the consideration of God and the nature of man, that there were no particular obligations towards the supreme Being, besides those which are derived from the admiration of

his greatness and the general gratitude on account of our existence. The actions of man, as far as they are determined by notions produced by natural instincts, by agreeable or disagreeable impressions of external objects, of education, of custom, and the different circumstances he is in, appear to me to be such, as could in particular instances neither please nor displease God, any more than the different events in nature, which are founded in its eternal laws. I was satisfied in observing that general as well as particular instances, tended to one point, namely the preservation of the whole ; and this alone was what I thought worthy of the care of a supreme Being. My attention therefore was chiefly fixed upon the duties I owed to my neighbours. The observance of which would as well promote my outward happiness, as give me inward satisfaction.

The desire which every one feels to be virtuous, and a natural inclination for actions useful in society, induced me to use my utmost endeavours to acquire a habit of virtue. But how could I find out true virtue, as I did not seek for it, where it was only to be found ? What a difference is there in the opinions of philosophers

phers about its nature and its motives ; how contradicting is the judgment of men on account of the effects it produces in particular cases ! Yet these were to determine my method of acting, even if God did not judge me, and I should resign myself up to my conscience, which is so easily misled, so often overpowered by passions, and so frequently not to be heard at all. I found at least, how easy it was to deceive ourselves in regard to our sentiments, though they were entirely left to our own judgment. I found on the other side many that were well inclined, though they were quite inactive. These and other reflections induced me to think, that virtue consisted in nothing else, but in actions which are useful to society, and in a desire of producing them.—Ambition, love of our native country, natural inclination to what is good, a well regulated self-love, or even the knowledge of religion, when they are considered as motives of virtue, I looked upon as indifferent things, according as they happened to make different impressions upon particular persons.—Reason and reflection were, in my opinion, the only teachers and regulators of virtue. He is to be counted the most virtuous whose actions are the most useful, the most difficult to be practised, and of the most extensive influence ;

and no one could be blamed who observed the laws of his country, and the true principles of honour.

I thought I had found in the nature of man sufficient powers and springs to make him virtuous. Revealed religion I looked upon as unnecessary, since it could only convince men, whose understandings were less enlightened, of the obligations of virtue. The effects of religion I never had perceived within me, at least I never had regarded them. Its doctrines seemed to contradict all the rest of my notions. Its morals appeared to me too severe, and I believed I found them full as clear, perfect and useful in the writings of philosophers. If you add to this, the following doubts: Religion is known but among a small part of mankind,—it makes very little impression upon the mind,—its abuse has produced a great many fatal consequences,—few of those that know it, act agreeably to its precepts,—but very little hope there is of a future life,—God's mercy will forgive the faults of error and precipitation,—the nature of man contradicts the precepts of religion and opposes them:—and you will easily imagine what inferences I drew from thence.

Reason

Reason guided by understanding, supported by ambition, self-love, and a natural inclination to what is good, became now the principles which determined my actions. To how many errors and mistakes was I exposed! I found it not difficult to excuse my favourite passions, and give myself up entirely to the gratification of them. The indulgence of my sensual desires appeared to me, at the most, to be only weakness, if they were not attended with bad consequences either to myself or to others, and this could be prevented by prudence and circumspection. I found that many who pretended to honour and virtue, yet indulged them, and excused them. The manners of the times permitted silently liberties which were condemned only by the too rigid moralist, but were treated with more indulgence and tenderness by those, that are acquainted with the human heart. Continence was in my eyes a virtue produced by prejudice. Whole nations subsisted without knowing or practising this virtue.

It is very humiliating to me, my dear friend, to repeat to you these false excuses, which appear to me at present highly absurd. However, they will be found adopted by all those, that act not quite thoughtlessly, but attempt to apologize

by arguments for the irregularity of their life. How easy is it in this manner to palliate and to justify the indulgence of every one of our passions? The ambitious man finds in all that he does patriotism and a laudable ambition; the self-conceited a noble pride, founded upon merit, and a justice which he owes to himself; the slanderer a love of truth, and innocent mirth, &c.

I hoped to escape those errors by an accurate self-examination, and an enquiry into the consequences of my actions. But how was I able to do this, were it possible to answer only for their most immediate consequences? Did I not deceive myself, in believing that I had the strongest intentions of doing good, and did really as much as I was able to do? Was it infatuation, insensibility and affectation, when I flattered myself to find, firmness and tranquillity in my present misfortunes? When I searched into the causes of them, I considered only the political ones, and how much could I find to excuse myself, if I did but consider the nature of my situation, and the accidents it was subject to? I had but a confused idea of my moral principles, and I could not reject them, without depriving myself of all comfort. My expectations of futurity I before told you: and  
by



by dissipating my thoughts and directing them to other subjects, I could more easily bear my misfortunes, and support my natural disposition, as the impression, an object makes upon our mind, grows stronger by constantly reflecting upon it.

In this condition, my dear friend, you found me, and we began our Conferences. You remember how much I thought myself convinced of my principles, how strongly they were imprinted on my mind, and how much I guarded against every passion that could rise within me. However, I found it but just to enquire into a matter that concerned my happiness, and which might be of such consequence with regard to futurity. An opinion, where the greatest probability amounts to certainty, receives still greater by examining that which is opposite to it. And to answer the objections which can be made against it, requires at least as much attention from us, as we bestowed upon the examination of the arguments which induced us to embrace it.

Upon considering my moral principles, I began immediately to doubt, whether they might not have been the cause of my mistaking what I

chiefly aimed at, namely, the inward satisfaction of my actions. I was very sensible, how much I deserved the reproaches of my own mind as well as those of others, if it was only on account of my unhappy friends, whose misfortunes greatly affected me. Might it not have been better, to have judged of my actions more by thinking from whence they arose, than to what they related, and what their consequences were? How few would my pleasures have been, and how little would my life have been! However, I should now have less necessity for repentance and contrition, though before I must have had greater conflicts and struggles with myself. The times of my suffering are only altered. If the first had taken place, my troubles would have been shorter, but now I feel an uniform and continued series of disagreeable sensations. I then should have suffered only myself.—And what satisfaction have I received of all which fortune seemed to promise me? My passions were perhaps gratified, but in such a manner as always left a void after them. My wishes were satisfied, but the anxiety I was under to preserve my possessions, took away the greatest part of their pleasure. I enjoyed a variety of pleasures, which by their nature destroy one another, and are at the most nothing more than dissipations.



I grew at last insensible to the pleasures of life, which is the natural consequence of being in possession of every thing which can render life easy and agreeable. I did not enjoy the comforts of friendship and society, as the situation I was in was extremely dissipated, and it required attention to a hundred trifles; besides, the impossibility of diverting my thoughts from the little dependance I could place on it, would not admit of any real satisfaction. Supposing too, that I even had good intentions, and the lawful means of putting them into practice, and that my faults were only the consequences of inattention and natural weakness, I should lose all the comforts I might derive from the former, by reproaching myself on account of the latter. I might have avoided them, by recollecting all their consequences, according to their different relations. However, even this was impossible when my passions represented to me the danger my own happiness and that of others was in, and the impossibility of providing against consequences which were then at a distance. When my passions and my reason were in opposition, and the understanding was to decide, I might have been always inclined in favour of that side where the pleasure seemed nearest, and  
 pain

pain at the greatest distance. Ambition and self-love, and the influence our actions have upon one another are easily explained, and in their application, found sufficient to answer their purposes. I could not now deny but that my principles were not capable of procuring me moral tranquillity, that my passions had been the chief springs of all my actions, and that no other comfort remained for me, but that which is derived from the inconstancy of human affairs. I might be indebted to my principles for my success in life, and my activity : but I must reject them, if they induced me to commit an action which deserves reproaches, and which destroys my inward happiness.

I was ready to give up my former principles as soon as I could discover better. I saw that they were liable to two objections. My way of judging of the morality of my actions from their relations and consequences, was neither safe nor certain. My arguments in favour of virtue, might be equally applicable to justify the gratification of my passions, as to controul them. They were not sufficiently strong in their effects, and were also liable to be misinterpreted, when my passions became too impetuous. Conscience, the inward sense of  
what

what is good or bad, and the fear of God, seemed not to obviate this difficulty. I found sufficient reasons to disallow them, and my sensuality would not permit me to feel their impression. Should these have taught me how to act with propriety and justice in all circumstances, and to make myself easy, though the consequences, the opinion of men, and the reproaches of my friends had been against me? No doubt. But then my actions should have been derived from my sentiments, and these should have had a certain fixed rule to direct them, to prevent me from falling into error.

I perceived my mistake, that I had placed virtue in actions only, without regard to their intentions, and by this I had lost what I was pursuing, inward contentment. *Gellert* shewed me the means by which I might have avoided it. *Jerusalem* convinced me what strength and assistance true devotion furnishes us with. *Reimarus* removed the doubts I had, that God did not concern himself with the moral actions of men. I will not repeat the series of meditations, which convinced me of the truth of what these excellent writers teach us. I shall only repeat a  
few

few of them, and those only which made the strongest impression upon me.

Was it not the love of sensual pleasures, which made me deny that truth, which my reason assented to, and represented other objects and false notions as matters of consequence?—Is there more safety and wisdom, where I find simple principles, which may be practised with clearness in all cases without exception, or there, where the variety of opinions, and the conditions which are innumerable, require more time for enquiring than action? If the moral distinction between virtue and vice, is not to be founded on the intentions, none can pretend to virtue, at least, it does not depend upon our own will. The prudent, the cautious, the crafty, the hypocrite shall then be virtuous; the simple, the careless, the unhappy, the sincere shall then be called wicked. My inward satisfaction will depend on the opinion of others and on accidents, if I cannot judge of my intentions by some fixed rules.

It is a very narrow notion to think that the universe taken together, is only worth the attention of the supreme Being. We know that  
knowledge

knowledge and a combination of many particular events and operating causes, which all tend to one end, produce actions of the greatest moral consequence to society. It is beyond man's capacity to represent to his mind these things at once. He loses the sight of the whole, by examining the parts separately. He is therefore obliged to fix his attention only upon those causes which are nearest and most sensible in their effects. Those which are more remote he must leave to chance, or which is the same thing, he must suppose, that they will not fail of their end, though they are not in his power. But let us go further. He that views the most remote possible event at one view, and knows how to direct every one of them to answer his particular design, and to remove with the greatest facility the obstacles which are in his way, deserves undoubtedly the name of a great man. The more regularity and harmony he can give to every part, the more can he depend upon the event. It must be displeasing, if he cannot effect this. The faults of single soldiers cannot be pleasing to a good general in time of action if he perceives them, and he needs must discover them. Many little irregularities render the whole imperfect. We overlook them, because our abilities will not permit us to do

do otherwise, and we are used to despise what we cannot attain to for want of power. But it is absurd to apply this manner of reasoning to God, and to believe that he follows our example, and takes care of the whole without attending to particular imperfections. That position: God has regulated the whole in such a manner, that the particular irregularities of men are of no consequence, and therefore indifferent to him, is founded upon this principle; that man acts always according to a fatal necessity. God therefore will certainly observe, how far every individual acts by his free-will consistently with his determination. Universal happiness cannot take place unless every one contributes towards it.

It is no argument, that God has dispensed such a number of good things in nature, and the instincts of man are so various, that every one may be happy. Others generally suffer and are made uneasy when our possessions encrease, and our enjoyments are great. Therefore the desire of encreasing our happiness in this manner, is inconsistent with our determination. The increase of our moral perfections can take place without detriment and for the benefit of the whole. The smallest transgression in this respect must



must be displeasing to God. What apologies can we make ? Perhaps such as a courtier makes when he deceives his master to serve his friend, or a minister of state when he loses sight of the public good to serve his own private interest.

It is owing to pride and prejudice in favour of our own internal strength, when we hope to be virtuous through our own powers. We commonly perceive in objects before us what we want to see. It is impossible to have all those ideas present in our mind which are required to draw just conclusions. We find those soonest which answer our purposes. The cool philosopher finds frequently that to be false, which he took for granted before he begun his inquiries. And since all this is most certain, how easy must it be for us to convince ourselves, how uncertain our way of reasoning is, when it concerns things which we earnestly desire, and when the question is, whether we shall allow or refuse ourselves the enjoyment of them. A lively impression, which presents us with the arguments on both sides, is the only means to keep us from error.

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How

How many disagreeable moments did these reflexions cause me! They were sufficient to convince me how much I had erred from what I was striving for; how little I had acted according to the true end of my nature, and how much I was to blame. I felt with pain, that I had followed false principles and narrow prejudices. You know, how much I was concerned for the misfortune of those persons with whom I had been connected. Nothing was now left me, but to endeavour to lessen the uneasiness I felt, since I found myself the only cause of it. But my pain became more violent, whenever I considered my situation from that side, where it made the greatest impression upon me. The many consequences of my vices, and the thoughts that I had offended God, most deeply affected me.

However, my former turn of thought made me mistrust, whether my present sentiments were not perhaps more a consequence of my present situation of mind, than of the conviction of my understanding. The uncertainty I was under concerning the nature of my soul and its immortality, prevented me from giving my full assent. *Bonnet* answered all my doubts as far as mere reason can arrive at any certainty. I could  
not

not deny that my present disposition of mind, if I compared it with a former one, was better adapted to enquire after truth and to find it out. Before, I used to pass over every thing which opposed my passions, and found good what they desired: but I was now more inclined to be cautious and mistrustful, and it is a great thing to acknowledge our faults. The more I considered my former doubts, the less reason I had to think them to be of any consequence. I examined every particular argument in favour of my former opinion: but at last I was obliged to own with *Gellert*, that if all that we know from reason, of God, of our soul, and our moral happiness was uncertain, truth must be folly, and error must be wisdom.

You know, my dear friend, how much these truths increased my uneasiness: I saw continually new objects, which hitherto had remained undiscovered, on account of the liveliness of the first impressions. The indifference I had to any fixed principles, my neglect of every single obligation, my remissness in doing good, when I had opportunity or abilities for it, the mischief which my example, and the propagating of my principles might do, the displeasure of God which my transgressions must draw upon me; all these cir-

cumstances united produced in me the greatest anxiety. And how could I lessen the anxiety such reflexions occasioned me? I took the resolution to act according to that truth which I had found. I had a lively sense of my former transgressions, but from whence could I derive the hopes of repairing what was done, or burying it in oblivion? It is uncertain whether good intentions will always be equally strong; perhaps new inticements and the errors of my understanding may overpower them. The thought which is directed towards God, the sentiments, conscience, and the recollection of its reproaches can be weakened. Virtue cannot prevent vice from being hurtful, much less can it repair the damage which is done. Time, opportunities and former situations were lost to me, and but little comfort was left me from this view. When I reflected on the idea which reason afforded me of God, I had but little hopes to flatter myself that my sins would be forgiven. If I attempted to form the most favourable idea of God's mercy, that he would consider the weakness and imperfection of human nature, I saw at the same time his justice and immutability, which were directly contrary to this idea. The consequences of actions happen in the moral world as they do in the natural, according to certain fixed rules. To these settled laws God leaves the fate of man,

and

and his fate depends upon himself, since he acts with liberty. Experience teaches us sufficiently that no exception is to be made to this rule. Every crime and every transgression carries its punishment along with it. Perhaps no instance can be produced which would not convince us of the truth of this assertion, if we estimate man's happiness according to what he feels within himself, and not according to the general notions we have of good fortune. The irregularity and variety of our passions are evils, and the painful consciousness of the crimes we have committed never leaves us. Will God produce good out of evil, to remove the misfortunes which our sins brought upon us, and which are a proof of his displeasure?

Of these truths I always have been convinced, but I looked upon them as necessary evils connected with our fate, which would cease with this life, even if they could be called a kind of punishment. I could diminish the lively impression of these evils by a firmness of soul, by coolness of mind acquired by practice, and a contemplation of the evils themselves, without fancying them greater than they really are. Patience, I fancied, might make us indifferent about them, and dissipation make us entirely forget them.

Supported by these considerations, I submitted to my misfortunes, since I could not avoid them, and they appeared to me in this light less terrible. We are apt to suppose an old erroneous tenet to be true, as we are apt to believe an often repeated falsehood. That hope which makes death the end of all our misfortunes, requires the greatest firmness and indifference to support it. You know those reasons which serve to inspire us with comfort in regard to a future life, agreeably to my former principles, and considering eternity in the view I did. However, the uncertainty of all this would have occasioned the greatest uneasiness, even at a time when I should not have been diffident of my own strength.

The continuation of my moral enquiries did not decrease this. Remembrance will be an essential matter, whereby my future state is to be connected with my present one. How should I obliterate the memory of these reproaches which torment me now? how should I regulate my sentiments? Every thing renewed the consciousness of my former reproaches, and I was so accustomed to my way of thinking, that it would, perhaps, be still more difficult to leave it, than any other custom I have been used to. I found this to be the fact; for my understanding,

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though

though convinced, yet thought, doubted, apologized, and saw a possibility of my not being in the wrong. The repeating of those reflexions which had shewn me my errors, brought me back to truth: however, I could not arrive at any certainty in regard to a future life, and the consequences of my transgressions with respect to the Deity. The truths of revealed religion did not yet make any impression upon my mind.

You gave me the History of the three last Years of the Life of Christ; I read it, and how excellent did I find the doctrines it contained! Its moral principles are simple, clear, and adapted to every situation in life. Whoever knows how difficult it is to reduce a science to general principles, cannot observe this without surprize, even if he considers Christ only as a mere man. I was ashamed to find here again what I formerly had forgot, and afterwards believed it to be owing to several books of morality I had read. I was convinced that the spirit of revenge was wrong, but I did not remember that Christ had ever forbid it. The love of our enemies had never before been taught us, and it appeared to me contradictory to our nature. I wished to be convinced, not only of this christian duty, but

of all the other principles of Christ's doctrine. Those objections which were made against Christ on account of his birth, his education in Egypt, and the instruction he received in the sciences which were taught by the Jews, made me imagine that his doctrine was more than human. How could he be above the prejudices of education and instruction? how could he teach things quite contrary to them? There is nothing contradictory in his doctrines or in his actions. We can easily convince ourselves of this, if we only avoid judging according to our own manners, customs and prejudices. Not to get acquainted with the Gospel because Christ was a Jew, is the same in reality as if one should object to read the writings of Mendelson \*, because he is a Jew. The life of Christ, published at Zurich, delivers the history in a modern style, and in an uninterrupted connexion. Though the manner of writing, and the expressions used by the sacred penmen, were not such as I greatly objected to, yet they have prevented me from reading serious enquiries on the sacred writings, since I used to read mostly those books which were written against them.

\* Moses Mendelson is a learned Jew, now living at Berlin. He has acquired great reputation by his philosophical writings. Some mention is made of him in the Critical Review, vol. xxxiv. p. 223.



A divine revelation had appeared to me unnecessary, its historical evidence dubious, and the facts related seemed to be very improbable. I now began to be convinced of the necessity of a divine revelation ; for many reasons, and in particular the necessity of finding out stronger motives for virtue than those which reason only supply us with, would no longer let me doubt of it. *Bonnet* and *Less* proved to me the possibility and credibility of the miracles. *West* might have been fully sufficient to have convinced me of the truth of Christ's resurrection, but you know I examined all the rest of the arguments. I believed many facts which are taught in natural philosophy, where I could not discover the cause and its effects ; why did I doubt of the possibility of miracles, when the design intended by them is so clear ? Certainly there was no other reason, but because I was not inclined to it. I am now as sure of the facts the truth of a divine revelation is founded upon, as if I saw them before me. When a number of credible witnesses agree in things in which our senses are only concerned, I am as much convinced of them, as if I knew them from my own experience. It was necessary for me to attain the highest degree of certainty in this respect, in order to remove all doubts which now and then perplexed my understanding ; and

I praise

I praise God, with a lively sense of gratitude, that I have met with success.

You know, my dear friend, with what a disposition of heart I began these enquiries. My former principles taught me to guard against every violent affection. Use, the nature of my employments, and the manner in which I rose to my former prosperity, had procured me a habit of acting in all circumstances with coolness. I found I had reason to be apprehensive, that in one point tenderness would get the better of my understanding, and this was friendship. This only made me sensible of the situation I was in; for neither the possession nor the loss of my former prosperity affected me much. I was always upon my guard against my fancy, and for this very reason I avoided reading poets and other authors that could inflame it. I was often doubtful about my opinions and mistrusted them, but when I once had adopted them as true, I avoided further enquiry and change, because they prevented my putting them in practice. My obstinacy, and my indefatigable pursuit of the same object, together with the coolness I acted with, have contributed much to my prosperity and my misfortune, and they might have been the cause of making me lose everlasting happiness, if the  
many

many proofs which I have heard and read of it, had not recovered me from my error.

The examination of the historical arguments of divine revelation with care and precaution, has satisfied and convinced me. Being certain of this, it was an easy matter for me to remove all my other doubts. I was certain there must be stronger arguments to convince us, than those which mere reason furnishes us with. A proper degree of self-love, honour, and love of virtue, are liable to so many explanations, our understanding can so easily be imposed upon, and our will is with so much difficulty restrained, from considering the object only from the point of view in which it is most agreeable. Nothing can have greater effect upon our conduct than a habit of devotion, and though I thought religion always useful for this purpose, I nevertheless believed, that a sufficient knowledge of our duty, and a desire of acting conformably to it, were at all times sufficient motives for being virtuous.

I found the origin of religious ceremonies in the natural fears and infirmities of men; I saw how much the many revolutions which have happened, have increased them, and what influence the manners, customs, and ways of thinking of nations had had upon them.

This

This consideration made me acknowledge with gratitude, the excellence of christianity, whose ceremonies are so clear and well founded. We accustom ourselves to those things which we see daily ; we perceive how they happen, but are unacquainted with their remote causes, which, at last, lose all their effect. For this very reason the idea of the existence of a God, and his providence over all things, is so little discoverable in our actions. Our internal sensations, conscience, and the contemplation of nature, seldom carry us so far back as to make any alteration in our moral conduct. The will of God, in regard to our happiness, remains doubtful to our reason, as long as it is left to the decision of our understanding. The various revelations in the Old Testament, prophecies, laws, and remarkable punishments, could be looked upon as impostures of men, and as things which arose from natural causes : but since Christ has come into the world, and told us that his doctrine was the will of God, and that he was sent to instruct us, and that he himself was the true God ; no further excuse remains for our ignorance and error. Every one to whom the opportunity is offered, and who will accept of it, can easily convince himself of its truth.

An unexceptionable evidence is as certain as our own experience, and whoever wants the latter testimony, may consider the present state of the Jews, who are living witnesses of the truth of Christ's prophecies. No persecution, oppression and contempt could ever induce this people to mix with other nations, and to adopt their manners and customs. The wonders by which Christ has confirmed his divine mission can be proved with the same certainty. They were performed without any preparations, without any circumstances that might have imposed upon the senses, without any previous expectation, before a number of incredulous spectators, in such a manner that no imposition can possibly be suspected. They were besides of such a nature that every man of common understanding might perceive, that those means which were made use of never could produce such effects. A man, born blind, recovered his sight; one that had lain four days in the grave, came to life again; a paralytic was restored to health again;—and all this by only speaking a word. If we were to suppose that in the regular course of nature such a thing was to happen just at this time, or that God produced these events by the interposition of almighty power, it follows, in the first instance, that Christ must have been informed of it before;

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and, in the second, that God heard him. Both which are equally a miracle, and a proof of his divine mission.

As soon as I was convinced of this ; nothing remained, but to examine whether the doctrine which he preached, and we are to believe, contained any thing that contradicted reason. He wishes me to be happy and to be virtuous ; to seek for my happiness not in sensual pleasures and in the gratification of my passions ; to love God above all things, and to deal with my neighbour as I wish to be dealt with myself. He enjoins me to believe that there is another life after this, where the condition I shall be in will depend on the sentiments and actions of this present life ; that without the assistance of God I am unable either to think or act virtuously ; that God will do nothing extraordinary for me, to remove the fatal consequences of my transgressions, which I have to fear in a future life ; that God has sent him to give me the most undoubted assurance of his justice, and his immutability : but that this, at the same time, is the greatest proof of his love towards me, since through him I am made acquainted with the surest way of becoming acceptable to the Supreme Being.—All this is very consistent with reason.

But

But Christ commanded me besides, to believe that he was very God and very man, and the son of God; and that in the divine nature the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one. This seemed to contradict all my notions which I hitherto had entertained. But I knew that the word of Christ was always truth, that he must be fully acquainted with these mysteries, and that I had not the least reason to imagine, he would require of me to believe any thing that was contradictory to reason. It might be above my understanding; but how many things do we meet with in the course of nature, whose existence we cannot deny, without being able to explain why they are so, and how they are connected with their causes? I thought myself obliged to believe these mysteries upon the word of Christ; nevertheless I considered them with great attention, without finding them contradictory. God might reveal himself unto us in a different manner from that he had hitherto made use of, though our reason was unable to explain it. God chose for this the language of men, and those signs by which we communicate our ideas to each other. The very God who spoke through Christ, was the same who made himself known to us as Father and Holy Ghost. It cannot be denied that God, when we consider his nature as well as his attributes, could

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not be able to produce various effects at the same time, without our being obliged to believe that his essence is divided. It therefore was the Supreme Being, which reason teaches us to be one, that operated through Christ, though it only appeared under a human form, and made itself known to us, since we ourselves could not perceive it by our senses. We are used to apply more common notions to less known objects, in order to explain more exactly the idea we have of them. This has recalled to my mind the idea of gravity, which in different bodies operates differently, though the power itself is always the same. I have not found any thing contradictory in this idea of the Trinity, notwithstanding that I have reflected upon this subject with great accuracy, and in more different views than I have done here. In the same manner I have found nothing contradictory in Christ's making known unto us God as Father and Holy Ghost.

How easily can we fall into errors if any one wants to give us an idea of a thing unknown to us, by comparing it with another we are acquainted with. I dare not apply, in such cases, every little idea annexed to the object, to the other which I want to explain it by. If I was to tell an Indian, that the water in our climate  
grows



grows sometimes as hard as stone, and he should then think that ice might be made red hot, and be used for materials to build a house, he would think something very absurd. Christ has shewn us God under the character of a Father, in order to compare his love towards his son under a figure that was known to us. A philosophical description would not have cleared it up better. But if we were to apply to God every thing that falls under the notion of a father, we should be liable to the same mistake of the Indian. In the same manner we can conceive how Christ, the Son of God, was born from his Father. From all eternity God would make himself known to us by Christ, and the word, *beget*, conveyed to us the best idea of this mysterious transaction within the Deity. We can likewise form an idea of that relation which subsists between the Father and Christ, by thinking him the Son of God ; we are only to separate those ideas which reason teaches us not to be applicable to God. The Son has his essence of the Father, and it is the same with that the Father has ; he loves him, and what is his is likewise the Son's.

Lastly, Christ promises, that after his departure, the spirit of God should confirm these truths which he had taught. This was done in

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a visible manner by those gifts which the Apostles received, and he continues to operate upon those who observe the doctrines of Christ, and, by so doing, are capable of making good resolutions, and of thinking and of acting as it pleases God.

God has now revealed himself in a threefold manner, and every one of them represents him to me as the author and promoter of my happiness. We are used to express compound ideas with a single word, to avoid prolixity. For this reason, the word, person, was made use of in the doctrine of the Trinity. If I now find a contradiction, when I say, "There is one God, but three persons in him," the fault is then in my understanding; its notions are not just, it combines the common notions of God and of a person in a strange and improper manner. If I was to oppose the doctrine of the Trinity, I should act like the Indian who would not believe the existence of ice, because he was told that it would melt and turn into water again in the summer and by the fire.

I reflect on Christ's redemption, to which my understanding has no objection. I am convinced how necessary it is for my happiness to know, that my actions are not indifferent to God: and now I am assured, with all historical certainty, that  
Christ

Christ lived, and was proved to be intimately connected with the Deity, by performing such actions as cannot be explained by natural causes. He assures me of his friendship, and I cannot conceive what advantage could arise to him, or what intention he could have to deceive me. I am inclined to believe my friend in a matter, where his former transactions have convinced me that his knowledge is superior to mine, if my understanding finds nothing contradictory in it. Christ tells me, that he knows the will of God, and that God himself speaks to me through him, which certainly is the best way to learn his will. The doctrines he inculcates agree with those which my own reason teaches to be necessary for my happiness; and I was sensible how easily I could misapply these doctrines, if I did not always remember, that God saw my actions. Whatever determined me formerly to act in such a manner as my own happiness required, I owed to other causes and intentions, and why should I not have interpreted the actions and kindness of Christ in the same manner? He recalls to my memory whatever I know from political and natural history, and expressly assures me that extraordinary events were designed for this purpose. He sums up all these together in this single proposition: God loves man as a father. Now God

shews himself as a friend. Christ is despised and looked upon as an impostor, though he teaches nothing but the manner in which we may become happy, and performs actions which are beneficial to men. To convince me more fully of his sincerity, he gives me the greatest proof of his friendship : he suffers death in confirmation of a truth, of which was I not certain, and did not confirm it accordingly, I could not be happy. God, with whom Christ is closely connected, permits all this. Can I now ever doubt that God's providence extends to me ? I know from reason that the regularity in my conduct must be pleasing to God, and that it is impossible for me to act agreeably to it, if I had not a lively idea of God's omnipresence. I know him now in the character of father and friend, and under both these denominations always shall represent him to me.

Christ enjoins me in particular to believe in him, and to remember his love towards me, and really without this I should not be able to perform my duty. The more I reflect on these truths which he has taught me, the more I find how far I am from living in a manner that would please God. Should I not be extremely sorry for having offended a friend whom I neglected,  
and

and would not know? I was uncertain whether there might be a future life, and whether the consequences of my offences could have any influence upon it. Christ promises me, that God will avert these evils, if I place an unreserved confidence in his friendship.—I am easy with regard to what is passed, however I know how soon a present idea effaces a former one: and this is the case when I strongly desire what I should deny myself. The doctrine of Christ informs me of this likewise. The spirit of God will revive these doctrines within me, if I make myself well acquainted with them, and constantly endeavour to put them into practice.

There is nothing in my reason that could prevent me from being fully convinced, that these means Christ teaches me, are the only ones that can render me virtuous and acceptable to God. It is my own fault if I do not receive and make use of them; for I then refuse to be happy. God will not, for my own sake, interrupt those regulations he has made in regard to future life. I must feel the bad consequences of my neglect, and of the vain hopes which I placed in God's mercy. I am obliged to him that he has made himself known to me in so extraordinary a manner. I could not even expect to deserve the

happy consequences of the resolution I had made of obeying Christ's precepts; since, without the perpetual assistance of the Spirit of God, I am unable to obey them, and since, notwithstanding this assistance, I so frequently neglect and forget them.

This is entirely consistent with the doctrine of Christ. I always believe these three but one God, and the idea I have makes the Trinity not different Deities. All this is conformable with my reason. However, I durst not hope, considering God and myself, that this Supreme Being would be so merciful as to teach me how, according to the sentiments of my own understanding, I could be happy. Full of gratitude and conscious of my being unworthy, I adore it, and shall never desist to adore and praise the mercy, shewn to me through Christ.

I was greatly affected when I read the life of Christ. It increased my pains, and gave me new ones. But I was afraid it was owing to my disposition of mind, because I was still full of doubts. The examination of the truth of the christian religion became more agreeable to me, the more I advanced in it. My reason was satisfied with it, but I did not find those inward feelings,

feelings, which, as I had heard, were connected with true christianity, according to the confused notions of some people. *Spalding's* book set me right in this point. I found here how difficult it is to get rid of opinions and sentiments which are become a second nature, though I was convinced that they were false and destructive. My doubts arose contrary to my wishes, and I did not pass them over before I had examined them separately, and had frequently reflected on the arguments for the truth of religion.

The application of its doctrines produced within me a lively repentance, sorrow, shame, and sentiments of humility. Without anxiety or fear I expected the comfort which the Gospel promised me. To regulate my sentiments agreeable to its precepts, was my chief employment. The perpetual remembrance of the greatness of God's mercy, which was shewn to me by the redemption of Christ, made me overcome those difficulties I found arose from my natural disposition. The pleasure of finding a happiness, which I hitherto had wilfully renounced, could not produce in me a lively joy, because I remembered that I had been seeking it formerly in a manner that could not please God. It was

impossible to make myself perfectly easy. I was prevented from this, by the thought that if I had formerly entertained my present sentiments, I might have thereby excited those persons, with whom I had been most intimate, to enquire after the same happiness. Now I am praying to God that he may do it, and I am persuaded he will, since Christ has promised it. Prayer takes away the uneasiness I have on this and other points, which are disagreeable for me to remember. I direct my thoughts to God, repeat the doctrines of the Gospel, reflect on their connexion, apply them to myself, and if I address myself to God in prayer in the name of my Redeemer for these mercies, I find that these contribute to render me easy, and I admire with gratitude the power of religion.

I see now how little a christian deserves the reproach of being self-interested. He prays, and receives no reward, but by endeavouring to please God, when he regulates his sentiments according to his precepts. If God hears him, he acknowledges with gratitude, that the doctrine of Christ procured him the means for it, he remembers his own weakness and praises the assistance of God. No blind confidence in God's mercy, nor the hope of the happiness of



a future life, inflame his imagination, which regulates itself after the disposition the mind is in. *Bonnet* and *Lavater* conducted me gradually to hopeful prospects of eternity, but I rather peruse the writings of *Spalding*, *Alberti*, and others of this kind.

The remembrance how indefatigable I had been for many years together, in collecting and practising my former principles, obliged me to keep a watchful eye over myself, for fear they might insensibly have an influence upon my new sentiments. How earnestly do I wish to efface the impression which I have made upon others. I never intended to propagate my principles, though I never denied them. I have reason to lament a crime, which I must be ashamed to own even before a world that thinks as I did formerly ; and I feel on this account, a more lively sense of those transgressions which I have committed against God. My sense of friendship and humanity always recalls to my mind the bad example, and the seduction by which I have contributed to make others look upon sensual pleasures as the chief end of our existence. Nothing that relates to my present situation disturbs me, except this and other reflections of this kind. To terror and a fear that deprives us of the use of reason,

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I always have been almost a stranger. Death was not terrible to me, since I looked upon it as a consequence of natural causes, and a fate that is unavoidable. At present nothing appears dreadful to me, since I know that I depend upon God, and am convinced of the truth of religion, and expect a happy eternity.

I praise God sincerely, that I arrived at this conviction, and I acknowledge it with a lively sense of gratitude, that you, my dear friend, have conducted me to it. You chose the only method which suits the disposition of my mind. Rhetorical figures and declamations would have had but little effect upon me. Suppose you had endeavoured to enflame my imagination and passions, my principles would soon have composed them again. The doctrines of religion I always remembered; for in the earlier days of my life I had frequently read the Bible, though with ideas quite different from those I entertain at present. Scripture expressions were familiar to me, and I afterwards had contracted habits to connect them with all the doubts and opinions which corresponded with my principles. Before my understanding was convinced that they were false, you could not expect that I should sincerely believe the truth of revelation. I soon  
discovered

discovered my transgression of moral duties ; but you know, and I have told you how much self-denial it cost me, to acknowledge my errors. My pride would fain animate me to conquer the fear of eternity like any other fear. My desire of being as happy in this world as possible, had taught me to despise every kind of danger, and this arose more from a cool reflection on the latter, than from a lively sense of happiness. Truth only could bring me back, and you left me to my own researches to discover it. You proposed to me, only those consequences which my turn of thought and actions could have in regard to such of my friends, as were concerned in my fate as well as I was in theirs. I was on this account always much affected, and this alone could put my mind in agitation. However, it could not have disposed me to embrace religion, if I had not clearly seen its truth ; and I am convinced I should have embraced it before this time, if its evidence had ever been laid before me, and taught me in the manner you did. I found in religion what I wished for, and what I thought I durst not hope for. I knew its truths only under certain images and expressions, to which I at last familiarized myself so much, that I forgot to combine any ideas with them. The first instruction can

be effected only by sensible representations, but I used them afterwards for raising doubts against religion; and this prevented me from expecting those comforts from it which I sought for.

I had two reasons for not examining more minutely the arguments for religion. You know the objections commonly made against the credibility of supernatural events and miracles. I was not acquainted with *Less* and *Bonnet*, and the objections appeared to me unanswerable. When on the other hand I reflected on the redemption of Christ, it seemed to contradict all my notions. To shew to man the love and justice of God in a stronger light, redemption is commonly represented thus: That God was angry on account of the sins of men, but loved them to such a degree that he was desirous of pardoning them. But this could not be effected without the death of his only begotten Son, who is God himself. The notions which I had of God, excited on this point particularly my attention, and it seemed hard to me to reconcile the necessity of redemption with them. I asked: Cannot God forgive without this! I was puzzled when I considered redemption only in relation to God. But as soon as you taught me to reflect on it, in relation to man, you removed all my doubts, I found

found the necessity and the greatness of God's mercy in giving his own Son to make men happy.

As to practical christianity, it always has offended me to find so many whose sentiments and actions so little corresponded to their pretended faith, and sense of truth. I discovered the effects of fancy and self-deceit, since they were satisfied to have avoided sensual extravagancies, abandoning themselves on the other side, under pretence of zeal for religion, to pride, envy, and a spirit of persecution. This abuse represented to me religion as an imposture, which had always been more hurtful to human society, than all irregular enjoyment of sensual pleasures. Imagination overlooks the means, and when it employs its powers with too much vivacity on the object, frequently through want of attention chuses the wrong ones. To apply the truth of religion carefully to oneself, to be honest and comply with the duties of our situation in life, I think most necessary to entitle a man to the name of a christian. In this view I have wrote this with pleasure. I submit it, my dear friend, to your judgment, and leave it to you to make that use of it which you think best.

*April the 23d, 1772.*

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THE  
HISTORY  
OF

Count Enevold Brandt,

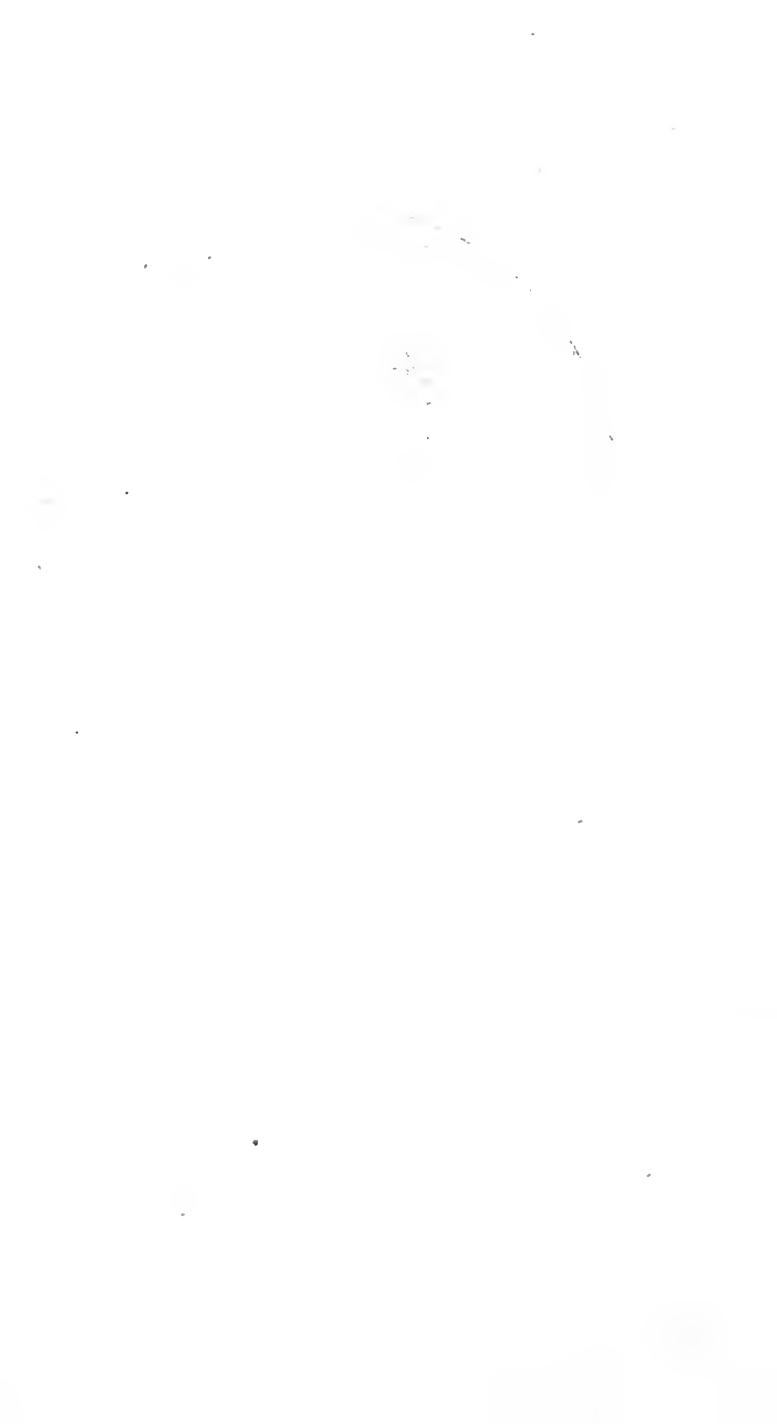
During the Time of his IMPRISONMENT  
until his DEATH.

WRITTEN BY  
The Reverend D. HEE.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

*The public may rely on the authenticity of the following account. It is beyond a doubt that D. Hee drew it up, and published it himself, for reasons which he mentions in the course of his narration. If the doctor should not answer the expectations we might have of him as a writer, the translator hopes, that his character as an honest man, and as a well-meaning divine, together with the subject of the narrative, will make some amends for it.*







Count Everold  
(de) Brandt.

The coat of arms is a shield divided into four quarters. The top-left quarter contains a lion passant guardant. The top-right quarter contains a lion passant guardant. The bottom-left quarter contains a lion passant guardant. The bottom-right quarter contains a lion passant guardant. The shield is supported by two lions. Above the shield is a crest featuring a crown and a figure holding a staff.

Engraved for the History of Count Brandt.

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T H E  
H I S T O R Y  
O F

Count Enevold Brandt, &c.

THE sentiments and the conduct of the unhappy Count Brandt, during the time of his imprisonment, were quite different from what they were in his prosperity, in which he offended all well inclined people. His behaviour was very edifying to those that had an opportunity of conversing with him, in the latter part of his life, and who have sincerity enough to own, that he was very much humbled, and that the words of our Saviour to St. Peter were applicable to him, when he says: ‘When thou art

converted, strengthen thy brethren.' He shewed himself in this character to all the officers that had the watch over him.

Since he was made prisoner of state, and even now after his death, many unjust, and, God knows, very untrue reports have been spread, as if his repentance had been hypocrisy, and his fortitude and chearfulness when he died, temerity and presumption. I have always contradicted such reports, and I do it now. Since I am fully convinced of the contrary, my conscience will not permit me to keep silence, but rather to declare, that the alteration of his sentiments was unfeigned, and that he hearkened to the invitations of the Gospel. I do this with so much the more readiness, since I believe that the greatest part of what has been said, has proceeded from a zeal to promote the cause of infidelity. There is a set of people, who think it their duty to defend incredulity, even at the expence of truth and conscience. They have assiduously propagated every thing which has been said about that levity of behaviour in the Count, which I myself observed in the beginning, but which he owned and so much repented of afterwards. I shall not apologize for what might have happened before I came,

nor

nor for that which was visible even in the beginning of my visiting him; I rather shall praise the mercy of God, which has shown its power so surprizingly afterwards, and confirmed what the Apostle says: ‘ Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.’

Count Brandt received the best of educations. He saw none but good examples in the house of his parents, who had chosen the best tutors to form his young heart for the fear of God. He himself was sensible of this in his prison, and assured me that he very often had felt the power of the converting grace of God within his soul. He recollected in particular the time when he was first admitted to the Lord’s Supper, by the Rev. Mr. Piper, at Copenhagen; at which time, according to his own words, he received the sacrament with a fervent devotion: he added, he could never forget the words of the clergyman, which made so great an impression upon his mind: ‘ Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.’

On the 23d of February, the Right Reverend the Bishop Harboe sent me the King’s own orders, whereby I was desired to visit

Count Brandt, who was prisoner in the castle \*. I was not over-pleased with this charge, knowing too well the sentiments and the former life of the Count. He had been the greatest voluptuary, and a friend to all those vices which are generally annexed to this character, and one that turned every part of religion into ridicule.

The next day I was introduced to him by General Hoben, as the clergyman with whom he might speak about religion. He received me with great civility, and I, on my side, assured him how much I sympathized with him in his misfortunes. I wanted to gain his confidence, and therefore asked him, how he could support himself in his distressed condition? He said, " His mind was very much composed and calm;" to which I replied: that it was a great advantage he enjoyed, and that I wished his ease of mind might be built upon a good foundation; upon which I took an opportunity to speak of religion as the only source of com-

\* General lieutenant Hoben, the commander of the castle, had asked Count Brandt: If he desired to converse with a divine? His answer was, he had no objection to it, but he should like to know who was to be the clergyman, that was to attend him. He was told that this entirely depended on the will of the king.

fort. He then said, " That he believed, the report that he had no religion, had reached me likewise." I said, I could not deny this; and I was therefore the more sorry, since he wanted what was most necessary, and what could be most useful to him both at present and in futurity.

" He then assured me that he never had been entirely without religion, though he must own that he did not speak always with due respect of it."

Finding that he had no intention to conceal his former way of thinking, I therefore asked him, if he should not like that we might be left alone to carry on our conversation by ourselves. He said, " He was ready for it." I then desired the officer who was upon watch, and who was with him day and night, to leave the room; which was the case afterwards always whenever I came. I now reminded him of what he had told me before, that he never had been without a sense of religion, not even then when he ridiculed it.

He confirmed what he had said, but owned that he had several doubts about religion. I

told him that doubting was very natural to us, and even good christians now and then might be made uneasy by doubts, but that it was sinful to raise doubts, and entertain them with delight.

His doubts were about the fall of man, original sin, and some other matters concerning religion. When I had given him an answer to these doubts, I exhorted him to leave his careless way of thinking, and not to obstruct the way to truth, by wilfully prejudicing himself against it. He said, " That he had formerly talked very freely against religion, but that many things he had said, were only produced by a desire of shewing himself witty."

When I exhorted him, since he saw himself how badly he had acted, and into what misery he by his contempt of religion had thrown himself, to mind now the time which was left him, and to look out for the salvation of his soul, he seemed to be greatly moved : particularly when I put him in mind of that good education he had enjoyed in the house of his parents, who took all possible care to prevent the ruin of his soul. When I represented to him the tears of his pious mother, on account of the unhappy condition



condition he was in, and the dangerous situation of his soul, he burst out into tears, so that I myself began to be very much moved. Many more things being said, and exhortations given, I took my leave of him, asking if it would be agreeable to him, that I should call again? To which he replied: "He should be glad to see me at any time."

I left him with good hopes, and heard soon after of the effects of my visit; for his levity, to which he was even in his prison addicted, seemed to be checked. According to the account given to the commander of the castle by the officer who had the watch, he not only had been very quiet, but had also burst out in tears for very near an hour and a half together, sitting all the while on his bed.—But as soon as he had eased his mind by his tears, his levity appeared again, for he sang an air afterwards. This, however, did not discourage me, nor abate my hopes. I visited him the next day again, and found that my visits were really not disagreeable to him; for he said, "He had longed to see me."

Our conversation of this day turned upon several religious subjects. I exhorted him to make the best use of his time, and to turn his thoughts towards God; and for this very reason I strongly

recommended prayer to him. I assured him that I had prayed fervently to God that he might save his soul, and I should continue doing the same. He thanked me for this, and acknowledged, that the compassion for him which I had shewn the day before, had gained me his heart, and had made me dear to him. I spoke several things after this, and found that my exhortations had some effect upon him, for he very seldom, when I was with him, even to the last day of his life, was without tears in his eyes, so often as I spoke to him about his former life, the depravity of his heart, and the greatness of God's mercy.—He owned that he earnestly desired the pardon of God, through Christ his Redeemer, of which he, as he himself said, stood greatly in need; although the natural disposition of his heart might not be bad, yet it would not justify him before God, in whose eyes he must appear as a very great sinner.

In the mean time a rumour was spread, and I heard of it, that he, even in my presence, with another person who sat next him, had made use of words which betrayed the great levity of his mind. I was very sorry to hear such things, and the next time I saw him, I very earnestly spoke to him about this report, and ap-  
pealed

pealed to his own conscience, whether he had been guilty of such a thing or not. He seemed to be affected on the occasion, and declared “ He was not sorry on account of what the people said; it grieved him rather that I myself should entertain such thoughts of him.” I assured him it was no pleasure to me to entertain them, but my conscience obliged me to admonish him concerning this report, that I might spare myself any future uneasiness about it. However, he owned, “ That it was possible *such words* might have escaped him, on account of the levity of his heart, but he hinted, that some person or other, that wanted to bring such reports among the people, had given him an occasion for it, of which he made use, whilst his heart was not upon its guard.”—I exhorted him to beg God to forgive him this transgression, and to be watchful over himself, that if opportunities should offer themselves of committing such an action again, he might resist in time: that he had better give no answer at all to things which might induce him to exert his vanity, but rather shew himself a penitent sinner, who was as anxious to edify others by his conversation now, as he formerly had been to corrupt them by it.—He answered, “ He was not able yet to shew himself as a religious man before others, but he should follow  
my

my advice, and give no answer to things that could dishonour himself and others."—I could desire of him no more at present, but exhorted him to search diligently the wretchedness of his moral condition, and to pray to God to assist him in this self examination.

I could easily imagine, that in my absence, when he had nothing to entertain himself with, his former vanity and levity would return again ; I therefore offered to bring him some religious books, that he might improve in what is good. He thanked me for it, and desired I would not forget it.

When I paid him my next visit, I brought him the translation of *Gibson's* Pastoral Letters, for I thought this book might be useful to him on account of the solid arguments it contains for the truth of the christian religion, particularly since the Count had formerly pretended to be a freethinker and a deist ; I gave him likewise some of Dr. *Doddridge's* writings. He took these books with a kind of eagerness, and told me afterwards that he had been edified by them. I likewise brought him a Bible, and heard at another time that, according to his own confession, the 53d chapter of the prophet *Isaiah*, and the 13th of *St. Luke* had made a great impression

pression upon him. He read some Psalms of David to me, and desired me to explain several passages which he did not quite understand. I did it, and he seemed to be pleased, for during the whole time I was sitting by his side, he would fix his eyes very attentively upon me. Now and then he would start some objections, but I cannot say that they ever shewed any levity of heart, or the least of malice, but rather tended to a desire of better information.—He begged of me to bring him *Hervey's Meditations*, and *Newton on Prophecies*, as the latter is translated into Danish by Commodore Effura. He told me afterwards that the reading of these books had much edified him, particularly the latter, since it contained such clear proofs of the divinity of the Scriptures, upon which all religion is built.

However, the reports of his pretended levity did not cease, and that his conduct in my absence was quite different from that when I was present: yet I found these reports, from the following reasons, to be false, and that they were the idle invention of ill-meaning people. The conversations we had together convince me that his expressions were the sentiments of his heart, which began to be averse to worldly things. Besides, I enquired of the honest and venerable commander of the castle,

castle, if any one of the officers that guarded him, and who were to give an account of him every morning, had mentioned any thing to this purpose ? He assured me it was all false, and that the Count, since I had brought him these books, had amused himself with them, and that he scarcely ever laid the Bible out of his hands ; for which reason he very seldom spoke of any thing else, much less of any thing that could give offence. The alteration of his sentiments appeared likewise, as the commander observed, from his behaviour before the committee that sat on his affairs, who testified that he not only freely answered the questions laid before him, but that he even confessed more than he was requested to do. The commander added, that if any thing indecent had happened, he would have informed me of it. I was pleased to hear this, and I was still more so, since every one of the officers that had been upon watch assured me, that his conversation was not only decent, but likewise oftentimes edifying ; for he frequently represented to them what comforts religion administered to a man who was convinced of its truth and importance ; it was the only means to make our minds composed, which happiness he enjoyed, and was indebted for it to religion. He assured them, that during his prosperity,

prosperity, and in the enjoyment of all lustful pleasures, he felt no real satisfaction of mind.

I was still more convinced of the falsity of these reports, since some things were said to have happened whilst I was with him, which I knew were not true. It was said, for instance, that when I was once with him, I, according to custom, had found him very devout; but when I had left the prison, I had listened at the door, which was bolted, and hearing from within some things which betrayed his levity, I had returned to him again, and reproached him on account of his conduct. This report, which, in some respects, concerned myself, convinced me clearly by its untruth, that some malicious persons invented and propagated all these stories, for the sake of rendering the reverence the Count paid to religion suspicious, lest his example might open the eyes of those professing his former principles. The Count himself hinted to me, that a certain person, whom he named, had propagated the most wicked and low expressions, which he was said to have dropped on account of his approaching death and execution. This same man, or somebody else like him, has given out, that I had denied giving the sacrament to the Count, because his heart was so hardened. How great  
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an untruth this is, the remainder of my narrative will shew.

I now was fully satisfied on account of these reports, and exhorted him to go on in the manner he had begun, till he had finished his course. I heard with pleasure, that he became a preacher of repentance himself. With great freedom he owned now before me and others, that his imprisonment was the means of setting his soul at liberty, and he found his chains so little troublesome to him, that he would oftentimes take them up and kiss them. “ For, said he, when I believed myself to be free, I was a miserable slave to my passions; and now, since I am a prisoner, truth and grace have set me at liberty.” He further pitied the miserable condition of those that were under the yoke of unbelief and sin, which he himself had worn, and kept himself in it by reading deistical writings. He mentioned, among the rest, the works of Voltaire, to whom he owed very little that was good. He said, he had spent upon his travels four days with this old advocate for unbelief, and had heard nothing from him but what could corrupt the heart and sound morals. He was very sorry for all this, but was much pleased that he had found a taste for the true word of God, whose



efficacy upon his heart, since he read it with good intentions, convinced him of its divine origin. On this occasion he spoke of Struensee, and said, he was a man without any religion, who, from his infancy, according to his own confession, never had any impression or feelings of it. As to himself, he assured me, that though he had been far from being virtuous, yet he always entertained a secret reverence for religion, and had spoken several times about it to Struensee, in hopes of bringing him to better sentiments, but he never would hear him. It appeared to me a little odd, that the blind should thus have led the blind: I therefore answered nothing, thinking it might perhaps be his self-conceit that made him speak so, or that he wanted to make me entertain a better opinion of his errors than I had reason for, therefore I would not tempt him to support an untruth by defending what he had told me. But I found afterwards that he had spoken the truth, when I was desired by D. Munter, in the name of Struensee, to come to him, as he had something to tell me, which was to be communicated to Count Brandt. The commander of the castle told me this message of D. Munter, and my answer was, that I was ready to call upon Struensee, if he (the commander) and D. Munter would be present. My request was granted,

and

and I came to Struensee, who received me very civilly, and gave me a long account of his former bad principles, (which, in short, were nothing else but mere *materialismus* and *mechanismus*, according to the system of *de la Mettrie* \*) and told me, lastly, what I was to tell Count Brandt. The contents of the message were, that he was convinced, by the grace of God, and by reading the Bible, of the divine authority of the Scriptures; and that I might tell Count Brandt of this alteration of his, which, he hoped, would be agreeable to him. He added, which I shall mention in his own words,

“ I confess that Brandt has spoken frequently to me about religion, but I always desired him to keep silence on this head.” By this I found, that what Brandt had told me concerning Struensee was true †. I brought the message I was charged with by Struensee directly to Brandt. He rejoiced inwardly on account of this news,

\* *De la Mettrie* died at Berlin in 1751. His famous book, *L'homme Machine*, makes man a mere machine, and his soul an insignificant word. The powers of the soul he thinks to be nothing else but an unknown motion of the brain. His *Traité de la vie heureuse*, contains the consequences of this system. He denies the immortality of the soul, laughs at all religion, and places all human happiness in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures.

† See the foregoing History of the Conversion of Count Struensee, p. 79, 83.

defined

desired me to go to Struensee again, and tell him that it gave him great pleasure to hear that he had embraced truth, and that he begged of him to adhere to it to the last. He added: "Tell Struensee, on my part, that my own experience has now taught me, that true ease of mind is nowhere to be found, but in Christ crucified."—I carried this message back again to Struensee, who seemed to be much pleased at it.

As I kept no journal of the subjects of our many conferences, I shall not attempt a circumstantial detail of them. I had never an intention of publishing this, if the aforementioned reports had not forced me to it.

The Count would frequently mention how unhappy his former condition had been; how great reason he had to praise God's mercy that had saved his life at several times in most imminent dangers, that he might not perish for ever. He mentioned in particular one instance, when he, last summer, was thrown from his horse, taken up for dead, and laid four and twenty hours speechless. "Consider, said he, where my poor soul would have gone to, if death had snatched me away in the condition I was then in, for I was dead in sins; but God spared me that I might come into this condition, and that my soul may be saved.

I exhorted him to pray frequently: He said, he did it very often, and looked upon it as a great mercy of God that he now considered it as his duty to pray: but, he said, he must complain that his heart was often very cold, though he repented of his former way of life, and hoped for mercy upon no other foundation than Christ's redemption. When I had comforted him in a manner I thought proper, he then told me, that he, one evening, after a fervent prayer, had found a great ease of mind and comfort.

Towards the end of his life he declared, that during the time I had attended him, he had three different impediments to conquer, which he, at last, through the assistance of Christ, overcame. The first was, that it was hard for him to confess that he really was so great a sinner as he afterwards did. The second was, to follow my advice, and to own before those that were about him the alteration of his sentiments. The third was of such a nature, that I dare not mention it, though it concerned his soul.—I found that these victories which he had gained over himself were not imaginary, but real ones: for he now was ready to open his heart, and to pour out what hitherto had lain concealed in it. He spoke

spoke without fear of his approaching death, and praised the inward assurance he enjoyed of being pardoned before God, and of which mercy he acknowledged himself to be unworthy. “What have I deserved before God, said he, but his eternal wrath?”

The time when his sentence was to be given now drew near, but he appeared to be quite calm, for he was confident of the honesty of his judges, and that they would act no otherwise than according to law and conscience. I shewed him that he was very right in this respect, and that it was a proof of a Providence, that his judges were all such men, whose knowledge of the law, and integrity of conscience, would not permit them to deviate the least from justice, and that he might be assured, his sentence would be entirely agreeable to the tenor of the law. As much as he seemed to be resigned to his fate, yet it appeared to me as if he still entertained some hopes of saving his life. Perhaps this was owing to the common rumour, that Count Brandt would come off without losing his life, which somebody had told him, and thereby revived the thought of escaping the scaffold. About four or five weeks before this, he was so full of the hopes of a pardon, that he felt a paroxysm of his former levity and ambition,

which made him desire of the royal commission to have his fetters taken off in a solemn manner, and to propose to them some other strange requests. He himself, when I once took my leave of him, told me about it, and I did not chuse to give him a direct answer, because I looked upon it as an attack of his former levity and precipitation. However, when I came again, I reminded him of what he had told me, and asked him, how he could entertain any such thought, which betrayed so much of his attachment to the world ? I desired him to give this up entirely, since he, in his present situation, should endeavour to disengage himself from all worldly things. He took this advice not at all amiss, but owned, that the thought he had entertained was produced by his levity, to which fault he was so much addicted, that he believed there were not ten people in the world equally so with himself. I looked upon this confession, and the manner in which he took what I had said, as a proof of the sincerity of his heart and his repentance. I told him likewise, on this occasion, how little foundation he had for entertaining any hopes of saving his life ; that his crimes were then indeed not publicly known, but that there was a public rumor in what they consisted ; and in case, said I, you should save your life, the greatest mercy that could be shewn to  
you,

you, would be the changing of your dead warrant into imprisonment for life; and I desired him to consider which he should prefer. He answered, "That if God should foresee that, in case his life was saved, he should be carried away again by vanity and sin, he would pray of him not to spare his life, but rather let him die; for it would be infinitely better for him to enter into a happy eternity and to be with Christ, than to become again a slave of sin, and to lose in this manner everlasting happiness." He repeated this declaration, at the very time when he expected his sentence, in such expressions which proved that the victory of grace and of faith was now become greater than before; for he said, his prayers were now always after the manner in which Christ prayed; "Not my will, but thine be done." "In case, said he, it cannot be otherwise, and I cannot escape death, I leave this world fully persuaded that this is the will of God, who sees that I might be carried away again by the world, and, therefore, in mercy to me will prevent this."

I went to him on the 24th of April, the day when he was to receive his sentence. I found him lying upon his bed, and more thoughtful than common; but he got up directly, and I began to speak to him in a comforting manner,

that he had no reason to be fearful of his sentence in this world, since he knew his judgment in that which is to come, namely, a full pardon before God through Christ his Redeemer. He then, after some further conversation, promised that he would make himself easy and wait composedly for the will of God.

I heard the next day that sentence was not only given, but that it was also believed that the King would entirely confirm it. I therefore went to him, and found him, though he was fully informed of the manner of his death, as composed and calm as I had left him. I spoke several things that could afford him comfort, and he heard all that I said with pleasure, and asked me afterwards whether I had read his sentence? I told him, I had not, and knew no more of it than what the common report was. He then took a copy of the sentence out of the drawer of a table which stood next to him. When I had read it, I said many things to comfort him; and he seemed quite composed; and as he now had given over all hopes of saving his life, he resigned himself entirely to his fate, and seemed to be so full of his future happiness that I could not help admiring his peace of mind, which God had granted to him whose  
 sins



sins had been so great. He himself was sensible of this, for he derived from this grace of God, not only his tranquillity of mind but even his health. For when he enjoyed his liberty, he frequently was not well, but during the long time of his imprisonment, though he could scarcely stir or move, he had a good appetite, and slept well. He asked me then what day his execution would take place, for he had heard that it was fixed for Thursday the 30th of April. I told him that I was in this respect as uninformed as he himself was; and the time of his departure must be equally the same to him, if he only knew he was ready.

The following day, which was Sunday, April the 26th, I received, just when I came from church, a letter from Bishop Harboe, wherein I was acquainted with the King's pleasure, that both the state-prisoners should be executed on Tuesday next, April the 28th, and that I was accordingly to regulate my affairs in regard to Count Brandt. This news put my mind into a great emotion: I hastened soon to the poor Count. When I came to the castle, I enquired of the commander, whether Brandt knew that his end was

so near. He answered, he did not, and he himself knew nothing of it, but thought he should receive orders for it that very evening ; which was the case. I therefore myself was to acquaint him with this melancholy news, and I did it in the following manner. Since I came to him to day rather earlier than usual, I told him I should make the best of his time since it was so short. He guessed from what I said that I knew the time of his execution, and asked when it was to be ? I told him it was the day after to-morrow, when he should be delivered from all evil. He heard it unconcerned, and said he readily submitted to the will of God. I then prepared him for receiving the sacrament, after which I took my leave.

I came on Monday about ten o'clock in the forenoon, and when I had spoke to him about the sacrament, I made a proposal to him, which I left to himself either to accept or not. I said, he knew how many bad reports were spread of his behaviour during the time of his imprisonment ; I therefore left it to him to consider whether it might not be of use to make a declaration before proper witnesses, what his real sentiments were. He readily complied with the proposal, and I went to the commander of  
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the castle, who came with four gentlemen officers more, in whose presence he declared, that he was ready to die and was not afraid of it ; he likewise confessed before the All-knowing God, that he without hypocrisy had sought for God's mercy ; he likewise confessed, as he had done before, that he had acted very inconsiderately, that his levity had been very great, and that he, on this account, acknowledged God's mercy, in suffering him to die, lest he should be drawn away again from religion. He said, he knew very well, that the same levity of temper had induced him, in the beginning of his imprisonment, to talk in a manner he was now ashamed of ; though he was sure in his conscience that many untruths were invented and propagated among the people ; but he forgave those who had been guilty of such a thing. Now he wished that those gentlemen that were present would bear testimony to what he should say. He then acknowledged himself a great sinner before God, a sinner who had gone astray, but was brought back by Christ. He then begged the commander and the other officers to forgive him, if by his levity he had offended any one of them, and wished that God's mercy in Christ might always attend them as the greatest blessing. He spoke all this with such a readiness and

and in so moving terms, that all who were present were affected by it, and every one of them wished that God would preserve him in this situation of mind to the last. When the gentlemen were gone, I administered the sacrament to him, and he appeared as penitent and as devout as I have at any time seen any christian whatever. When I approached to give him the sacrament, he turned in the chair as if he would face me, and I, thinking he meant only to make it more commodious to me to give it him, desired him to sit still; but he said, "He would try to kneel down," which he did, and received the sacrament with so many tears and with such signs of inward hope, that I could not help being greatly affected.

I left him about noon, but came again in the afternoon, when I found him quite composed without any fear of death. I spent all the time I was with him in devotion, and left him late in the evening.

On Tuesday the 28th of April, which was the day of his execution, and as I firmly believed of his entrance into the bliss of eternity, I came to him early in the morning, about six o'clock.

o'clock. I asked him directly how he did, and how he had rested that night. He said, "He was very well, and had rested well." I answered, I was glad to hear it; for if the body had had its rest, his soul would be the more serene to enter upon its journey. He prayed a long while in my presence very fervently. He shewed himself in his expressions a humble and penitent sinner, but at the same time one who entertains the surest hopes of being pardoned before God. He prayed for the church of Christ, for the King and the nation, for all that were misled by error and irreligion. Lastly, he prayed to God to forgive him all that whereby he had offended others, and expressed how readily he forgave those that were his enemies. He thanked God for all the mercies he had shewn him during the time of his imprisonment; he prayed for me likewise. Then he read the Lord's prayer with much attention, adding now and then an explanation to what he had been reading, insomuch that I was amazed to see how great his presence of mind was when he was just going to die. When he was pronouncing the words, 'Thy kingdom come,' he added: "Yes, now it is coming." When he read, 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against

against us,' He added: "Thou O God and my Redeemer, who knowest my own heart and that of all men, thou knowest how free my heart is from all hatred and malice against any person whatever, and that I wish well to every body in this and the future world."

When he had finished his prayers, his chains, which were fixed in the wall, were taken off, and he put those clothes on in which he intended to appear on the scaffold. He then drank a dish of coffee and eat something, walking up and down in the room, which he could not do before. As often as I asked him how he found himself, he said, he was not afraid of dying. He afterwards asked me, whether I had seen any body executed before, and how far he was to lay his body bare for execution?

Soon after, the door of the prison was opened, and an officer desired me to get into a coach that was to carry me before him to the place of execution. I then recommended him to the mercy of God, who was ready and powerful to strengthen to the last. He then embraced me, and we parted, till we met again at the place of execution.

When

When I received him there, I comforted him, and said, among other words, that Christ would not leave him. Upon which he answered: " He has been with me all the way hither." We then went up the stairs to the scaffold. Even here, he assured me his mind was composed, and he was not afraid of death. I spoke several things after his sentence was read to him, and his coat of arms broken. And when I happened to quote the words, ' Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee,' he said: " Yes, they all are cast into the depths of the sea."

When I had read those things from the ritual which are usual on such occasions, and had asked him, if he acknowledged the justice of his sentence? and when he had answered, " Yes," he then began to pray that God would bless the King and the whole land for Christ's sake. Several prayers being offered up on my part, I gave him the benediction, and taking him by the hand, delivered him up to justice. He quickly pulled his clothes off, laid himself down, and when his head was already upon the block, and I reminded him of Jesus falling on his face in Gethsemane praying, he

3 said :

said: " The blood of Christ interceedeth for me." Whilst I was saying: ' O Christ, in thee I live, in thee I die; O thou Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, be merciful,' he suffered his punishment.



*Two anonymous LETTERS to Count BRANDT, which were found in the pocket-book which he used always to carry about him, wherein he was forewarned of what happened to him many months after.*



Sir,

" Perhaps you may wonder to receive a letter without a name on a matter of so great importance, from a friend who formerly used to tell you the truth before your face; but the times we live in now, will not justify a man in exposing himself to danger, without seeing any good arising from it.

The two last court-days, I sought for an opportunity at Hirschholm to speak a few words to you in private; but I found it was impossible. You might have observed this, if you had been at all attentive; but I found you so much engaged with another object, that I could not approach



approach you near enough to make you understand what I wanted: and I thought it not advisable to go to Hirschholm on purpose to pay you a visit.

Once, Sir, you shewed that you had the honour of your master at heart. It was then asserted, that neither zeal nor attachment were the springs of your actions, but ambition and interest, because you hoped that if you could bring into disgrace Count H—— you might succeed him in that favour and honour he enjoyed. However, the bulk of the people thought your intentions noble and without self-interest. Perhaps the immediate consequences of this your transaction have made so great an impression upon you, that you think you dare not venture upon such another. And yet the final issue of the affair has shewn, that even your ill success in it has been more advantageous to you than detrimental. Therefore, Sir, do not think that this was the mere effect of accident, but rather that a higher hand has guided this matter. I do not know what your notions of God may be, or whether you believe a God at all, or only a mere Stoic fate. It would be very superfluous to debate a matter of so great importance here. Time will come, when experience will

will teach you that there is a God, who sees and knows every thing, who either early or late rewards virtue and punishes vice.

My intention is not at present to make you a christian. It is only to remind you of your duty, that duty, which even an honest heathen thought himself obliged to, towards his King, his country, himself and his family. The heathen laws demanded this of every subject and of every man who laid any claim to honour.

You see, Sir, in what manner your King and benefactor is used. You see the indecent things that are done before his eyes, and in which you yourself are too much concerned. You see that in the whole kingdom every thing is turned upside down. Consider, Sir, and recover your senses, and you will not be at a loss how to act. If it is true, (and it is but too true) that the life of the King is in danger, or at least, that preparations are making to take away his liberty; you certainly must know it. The sense of the nation on this head cannot be unknown to you, and that one time or other you are to account for the life and liberty of your Sovereign. You, Sir, since you are constantly about him,

and

and since you see and know of every thing; be assured that your head will be answerable for it either sooner or later. Think of your own safety, I conjure you by the friendship I entertain for you. It is in your power to do it. You see plainly from the desire of the King to avoid the place and company in which he is ill-used, and from his aversion to return to it, that he is sensible of the ill-treatment. He one time or another will deliver himself from you, or good fortune will rid him of you, and what will then be your fate? Would it not be best for you, to save your head, and to do at the same time your duty? To build your happiness on a solid and noble foundation, which you then will owe to your zeal, your faithfulness and attachment to your King, who will reward you with riches and honour, and the nation will not think even this an equivalent for your services. You and your present welfare depends on the caprice of a wretch who will abandon you as soon as he is above your assistance. At present he makes use of you as the monkey did of the cat, and I fancy you have found this out more than once if you will not impose upon yourself.

If the King should come to town, I advise you to act in this manner. Prevail upon him

to go to the palace, and persuade him to call for one or two of his faithful servants to consult in what manner to proceed. It is unfortunate enough that the number of these faithful servants is so small, and reduced perhaps to one or two persons; for the best and cleverest men are carefully removed. You will easily guess who these persons are without my naming them. Perseverance, honesty, and experience are characteristics by which you are to know them. I could name them, but I would avoid the least suspicion of self-interest. However, I must tell you, that it is neither ——— nor ———; both are detested by the nation to an equal degree. You will forfeit your head if you do not follow this advice, which I give you as your friend, and a faithful servant of the King. If you do not mind it, but neglect your duty towards your King and benefactor, you may be sure it will cost you your life, your honour, and every thing which is dearest to an honest man, and besides no body will pity you. If you, on the other side, do what your duty requires, and save your King from those wicked hands he is fallen into, you may be sure that there is no honour or prosperity to which you would not be entitled to, and this with consent of the King and all his faithful subjects.

Perhaps

Perhaps you will think proper to shew this letter to your Struensee, to give him a proof of your faithfulness, at the expence of those obligations you have sworn to your King, and to induce him to grant new favours to the husband of Lady ———; and perhaps he might do it, to deceive you, and to keep you in his interest. But I assure you that if they have got rid of the King, you will be wretched, and perhaps the guilt will fall upon you.

I repeat it again, your head shall answer for the safety of the King. You are continually about him, you accompany him, you are intrusted with his person. And lest you may plead ignorance, I assure you upon honour, that in such case, the copy of this letter shall be produced against you in proper time and place. And for fear you should mistake in this respect, I desire you to mind the seal of this letter, which contains the initial letters of my name, and which will also be produced against you.

The life and health of the King, together with the welfare of the kingdom, are in your hands; act in a manner that you can answer for before your fellow-citizens, I will not say before God, (for I do not know what your idea

of God may be, though I have reason to think, from what you told me once in your apartments at Christiansburg, and afterwards at Hirschholm, that your notions are not altogether as they should be.)

You see I am not afraid of your guessing who I am, and I assure you, that if you act as I expect from your birth, you will find me to be your faithful and devoted servant."

*July the 8th, 1771.*

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"Well, Sir, what I foretold you has happened, and you feel already the effects of your bad conduct. You have been faithless to your King, and you are now treated by others in the same manner. They use you as the monkey did the cat. You are deceived, and since they find they can do with you whatever they please, they laugh at you now, and it will not last long before they will send you with contempt about your business; and lest you should tell tales, they very likely may imprison you for life, or send you, by some means or other, into another world. This will be the due reward of your treachery, cowardice, and your mean actions. I prognosticated all these things to you in my last letter of July the 8th: since that time, my friendship for you, of which  
I have

I have given you undeniable proofs, is grown very cool; you do not deserve that it should continue, since you have been unable to follow good advice, and to do what your honour and your duty requires of you; you rather have chosen to persevere in your wicked way of life. If you, at that time, had followed my advice, you would have set the King at liberty by saving him, and your praise would have been immortal: you then would have satisfied the duties of a good subject, of a faithful servant, and of an honest man: you would have gained the applause, not only of all your countrymen, but even of all Europe: they would all have united to procure you rewards according to your merit, and proportionable to the services done to the King and your country. And certainly nobody would have been more deserving of rewards. But now you are detested through the whole kingdom, and every where you are laughed at. Much was expected from your loyalty, your love for the King, and from a sense of your own duty; but people were mistaken. You are now punished; you are infamous among the whole nation, and your name is mentioned with horror. At court you are laughed at, and entertained with vain hopes; an imaginary greatness is shewn you, you are tickled with the empty title of Count, which will remain a monument of

your want of faith, your weakness, your meanness, and your reproachful conduct. In the mean time Struensee insults the King and the whole royal family, not because they had offended him, but only to shew his unlimited power. He arrogates all honours to himself; he makes himself master of the government, the concerns of the kingdom, and of the King himself, whom he dishonours before the whole world; he disposes of the revenues of the kingdom in a despotic manner, and against all order. This wretch durst attempt to put himself on a level with his master, by drawing up an order, by which the signing of his name obtains the same authority, which, according to the constitution of the kingdom, only belongs to the signature of the King. Your meanness, and your unwarrantable conduct, have assisted to raise him so high; you could have prevented this, and therefore you will be answerable for the consequences. He commits crimes, and assassinations, and he does it to keep the reins of government; but you contribute your share, by obeying the orders of this Cromwell, who is ready to sacrifice the life of the King a thousand times over, if possible, that he may obtain his wicked ends, and provide for his own security. Instead of acquainting the King with things which nobody knows better than you, (for you are cunning enough



enough when it concerns your own interest) you assist this *Dick beat the bush* in arrogating to himself royal authority ; in keeping his master under guardianship ; in degrading him in the eyes of his subjects, that their love may cease, or at least decrease ; and lastly, as every one says, in using him personally ill in the bargain.

You that can prevent all this, and save the King from the hands of this good-for-nothing wretch, and yet are not willing to do it, you, Sir, are accountable for it, and you deserve greater punishment than the traitor himself : and believe me, as sure as that there is a God, you sooner or later, shall pay for it with your head.

You see how preposterously business is transacted ; every thing is overthrown and jumbled together in the most strange manner, and blended with the highest inconsiderateness, of which there is no parallel instance to be met with in history. The most honest people that have served the kingdom such a long while and so faithfully that even envy itself could not blame them, are removed at a distance : they are turned away in the most shameful manner, if they will not fall in with the measures of this *Doctor of physic*, or if he is afraid of their honesty. Their places are filled up with wretches who know nothing of the constitution of the kingdom and of the situation of affairs ;

who know nothing of the business annexed to their offices; in short, people of whom nobody so much as dreamt that they were acquainted even with the first principles of the art of government.

For God's sake! what is the meaning that a ——— and ———, professor of mathematics at Ligniz, is placed at the head of the board of finances? These men enjoy a yearly salary of 3000 rixdollars, whilst others that have served forty or fifty years without blame, are now starving, because they could not betray the King and their country, and would not be employed in promoting bad and destructive ends. Yet these ignorant men dare to take upon their shoulders a burden under which, particularly in these unhappy times, a man of courage, abilities, and experience would have trembled. However, the wise man knows the danger, and therefore will not hazard the welfare of the nation and his good character; but the ignorant man who has nothing to lose, does not perceive the unhappy consequences of his inability and ignorance.

You see, Sir, that the nation is acquainted with the wretchedness of this present administration, that it feels the bad consequences of it, which will drive it at last to extremities. You may be assured of the truth of this the more, since dis-

content

content discovers itself in a public and an alarming manner. You know all this, but you conceal it from the King, though you are the only man that converses with the King, whilst access to the throne is denied to all the rest of his subjects. You alone can inform the King of the dangerous situation he himself and his kingdoms are in. The inconceivable indifference wherewith the best and bravest of the King's subjects are treated, shews that a certain kingdom (Norway) may soon become alienated; so that, in a short time, every thing may be lost without help, if his Majesty continues to hearken to such bad advice.

You see, Sir, how the department of foreign affairs is managed, and how, by the intrigues and incapacity of our *great prime minister*, who has the audacity to interfere, every thing is perplexed, so that the name of the Danes is now a subject for ridicule.

You see, Sir, and you know, how arbitrarily his *excellency our great prime minister, Count Struensee*, disposes of the finances—the pure blood of the poor subjects.

You, Sir, as you are a Dane, of noble extraction, beloved by your King, to whom you  
and

and your family owe so many favours; and yet for you to keep silence!—Do not you blush? and are you not convinced in your conscience, that you yourself ought to fall the first sacrifice of such conduct, since you might have prevented all this, or had, at least, a thousand opportunities to set things to rights again?

If tumult and rebellion (which God forbid) should be the consequences, of whom do you think the exasperated populace would take hold first? Would not they secure you first, since you are, at least, as culpable as Struensee? And do not you expose your life, sooner or later, to the greatest danger by this conduct, which is not consistent with the character of an honest man?

Reflect, Sir, and return to your duty: I conjure you by the ashes of your father, whom you never knew; by the tears of your virtuous mother, who weeps, perhaps, already on account of your approaching untimely death; and what is still more, I conjure you by the tears, which, perhaps, one time may be shed, on your account, by the King, the royal family, and your afflicted country.

You are not afraid to disagree with the *Døstør-prime-minister* when it concerns your private interest;

rest; but you are mean enough to be reconciled by a present of 10,000 rixdollars, of which he has robbed the King and the nation to give them to you. Are you not ashamed of such a meanness? and are you afraid of this man in matters that concern the welfare of your King and your country? These traitors and villains, who defend a bad cause, would not have courage to oppose you, through fear of endangering their heads, which already sit loosely upon their shoulders. You would save your King and your country; you would deserve rewards, and would have a right to claim them; they would follow you of course, since nobody would refuse them: I myself, who write this letter, would be the first that would contribute largely towards loading you with riches. With what tranquillity and inward satisfaction would you enjoy your fortune, your prerogatives, and your honour, if you should gain this by the consent, and even agreeably to the wishes of your King, your country, and your fellow citizens. I desire you, Sir, to consider this well, though I entertain a better opinion of your generosity, than to suppose that you are to be instigated to perform noble actions only by mercenary motives.

In my opinion you must begin this important business in the following manner. You are frequently alone with the King: you take a walk in  
the

the evening with the King, as I was informed last Wednesday at Hirschholm : you have found that the King is weary of the guardianship he is kept under. Make use, Sir, of such a favorable moment, or occasion it yourself, since you have understanding enough for it. Represent to him the unhappy situation he is in, and how inconsistent it is with those obligations his royal dignity lays him under. Tell him that he, by signing the order of the 15th of July, has divided the throne and his royal authority between himself and Struensee ; that he himself, the royal family, the kingdom, all his subjects, his revenues, the life and the property of every one, are left to the arbitrary disposal of this *arch-grand-vizir*, who is a man without experience, without honour, without religion, without fidelity ; who does not regard laws, who is master over all, even over the life of the King. You know that great crimes are oftentimes productive of still greater ones, or that we at least must fear that it might happen. When you have explained this to the King, then represent to him the despair his subjects are in, and to what they might be driven by such a destructive administration, and by such misery. Shew him what danger threatens him and his empire, if this wretch has time enough to turn every thing upside down. If you should put the heart of the King in emotion, and should

have convinced him, how absolutely necessary it was, to think of the preservation of his royal person, his family, and his kingdom; then propose to him to go directly to Copenhagen, where he will be quite safe; to resort to the palace, and to send for two or three noblemen that can give good advice, according as the circumstances require; that he might not take false steps (which could be of consequence) at the time when the nation should attempt to revenge itself, and to shew its hatred against the authors of its misfortunes and its miseries. I could name these persons, but the nation will do it for me; they ought to be persons acquainted with government, that they may advise according as the present situation of affairs requires: but it must not be ———, nor ———, nor ———, for these three the nation equally detests, and they, therefore, would frustrate the whole design.

For God's, your King's, your country's, your family's, your own sake, consider all this well, and do not delay any longer to hasten to the assistance of your unhappy country. Save the nation, the King, and your own head.

*September the 19th, 1771.*

*The Sentence of Count ENEVOLD BRANDT,  
at full length.*

**I**T appears, from Count Brandt's own confession, as well as from the declaration of the late prime minister, John Frederick Struensee, and from other circumstances, that Count Enevold Brandt was not only Struensee's very good friend, but even his intimate, whom he intrusted with his greatest secrets.

Therefore, in consideration of the royal favour and intimacy which he enjoyed, it would have been his duty to endeavour, by all means, to remove those things, of which he, according to his own declaration in his trial, disapproved in the conduct, sentiments, and transactions of Struensee, and which he must have found foolish, audacious, and detrimental both to the King, the administration, and the whole empire.

Instead of this, he, as a criminal subject and servant of the King, unworthy of his trust, has acted in concert with Struensee, and has not left off to be his intimate, and to assist him.

He suffered himself to be employed by Struensee to keep every body from speaking to the King, lest his Majesty should be informed of what was blameable in Struensee's conduct, in which he himself was so deeply concerned.

He



He has behaved, not only in private, but even publicly, to the great concern of his fellow subjects, insolently, and without any respect towards his King.

He has not shewn that reverence to his Majesty which every good subject thinks his duty, and expresses readily from his heart on all occasions, in his words and actions: he rather has opposed the King, that he might gain and keep Struensee's favour, to obtain an extravagant fortune, and serve his own private interest.

His memoir, which is a kind of correspondence between him and Struensee, is a proof of his absurd pretensions, and that he acknowledged his blameable behaviour towards the King. Therefore he should have altered and amended his conduct, and rather have quitted a post that he held, which he disliked, and for which he was not qualified. But no! he would not act contrary to the will of his benefactor and protector Struensee, who wanted him, for his own purposes, to be about the King's person; and Count Brandt, on his part, expected to be rewarded by his friend with greater honours and riches.

He in his department as *directeur des spectacles*, has assisted Struensee, to bring about a misunderstanding in the royal family, by assigning to Prince Frederick a separate box in the play-house

house, lest his Royal Highness should have an opportunity, by being in the same box with the King, to acquaint him with Count Brandt's and his intimate friend's most blameable conduct.

He has prevailed upon Struensee to make him, within a short time, presents out of the King's treasury to the amount of 60,000 rix-dollars, though he was convinced, he neither for his services nor for his conduct deserved such a reward.

When he returned his thanks to his Majesty for these great presents, he did not mention the sum, because he was conscious that he was undeserving of it, and because Struensee had desired him not to mention it, lest the King should get an insight into that, which the approved of extracts of accounts have since clearly shewn to his Majesty and every one who inspects them.

All these criminal actions are perpetrated by Count Brandt, and his conscience must also tell him every moment, that he acted as a faithless subject, and particularly against his duty and obligations on account of the especial favour and confidence his Majesty honoured him with: and besides all this, he was so earnestly and so sensibly put in mind of his duty in two  
anonymous

anonymous letters, which were found in his pocket-book, and wherein he was advised concerning what he ought to have done, if he wished to preserve his head from the scaffold.

He was ruled and guided by nothing but insolence, ambition and avarice.

Criminal as all these mentioned things are yet they are nothing in comparison to what Count Enevold Brandt himself has confessed, clearly and plainly before the King's commission; and what is proved and confirmed by several witnesses; *That he has laid hands on the sacred person of his Majesty.* For it may be considered, as if he had attempted to kill his Majesty, because it cannot be foretold what the issue of such an assault might be, and an unlucky blow on a tender part has frequently been the cause of death.

He was angry at the King, and wanted satisfaction of his royal master, whose well deserved admonition he should have received with repentance of his former behaviour towards him, and should have avoided coming into his presence, lest he should offend him again.

Instead of this, he planned with his friend Struensee, how and when he could best assault his Majesty, and considered by himself, what weapons he was to use, which he kept in readi-

ness, though upon second consideration he did not make use of them.

Being told by Struensee that the King was by himself, and that it was now time to put his design into execution, he considerately and with full intention to revenge himself, went to the King, turned the two pages that were in waiting out of the room, bolted the door, lest any body should come in to oppose him and to prevent his design, and forced his Majesty by words and by an assault to make resistance.

He wounded the King in this scuffle on the neck, and abused his benefactor and his King with words and expressions so shocking and rebellious, that every body must forbear repeating them.

Though Count Brandt has said in his defence, that his Majesty had forgiven him this; yet, suppose it were so, it cannot be understood otherwise, than that his Majesty would forbear punishing so great a crime for a while. This indulgence does not justify him, and his Majesty must know best how far it should extend itself.

This detestable and traitorous action of Count Brandt, cannot be considered otherwise than as an open attempt upon the King's person, and cannot fall under any other denomination than  
that

that of high-treason, which deserves the punishment fixed upon such a crime in the Danish code of laws, book vi. chap. 4. article 1.

We therefore judging accordingly, think it to be just and right, that

Count Enevold Brandt shall have forfeited his honour, his life, and his estates; that he shall be degraded from his dignity as Count, and all other dignities which have been conferred upon him. His coat of arms which he had as Count, shall be broken by the executioner on the scaffold; likewise shall Count Enevold Brandt's right hand and afterwards his head be cut off when alive, his body shall be quartered and laid upon the wheel, and his head and his hand shall be stuck upon a pole.

Given by the King's commission at the castle of Christiansburg, *April* the 25th, 1772.

I. K. Juel Wind.    G. A. Braem.    H. Stampe.

(L. S.)                      (L. S.)                      (L. S.)

Luxdorph.            A. G. Carstens.    Kofod Ancher.

(L. S.)                      (L. S.)                      (L. S.)

I. E. E. Schmidt.    F. C. Sevel.    O. Guldberg.

(L. S.)                      (L. S.)                      (L. S.)

The approbation of the King is as follows.

We

We hereby approve in all points of the sentence, pronounced by the commission of enquiry which we had appointed at our castle of Christiansburg, against Enevold Brandt, on account of his detestable and traitorous design and assault upon our own person, that he shall have forfeited his honour, life, and estate, shall be deprived of his dignity as Count, and all other dignities which have been conferred upon him, his coat of arms shall be broken by the executioner on the scaffold; that his right hand, and afterwards his head, shall be cut off when alive; his body shall be quartered and laid upon the wheel, and his head and his hand shall be stuck upon a pole. Whereupon those whom it concerns are commanded to act accordingly.

Given at our castle of Christiansburg, the 27th of *April*, 1772.

C H R I S T I A N.

O. Tott

LUXDORPH. A. SCHUMACHER.  
DONS. HOYER.

F I N I S.



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